



THE PHILOSOPHICAL AGE

**THE NORTHERN LIGHTS
SOCIAL PHILOSOPHIES AND UTOPIAS
OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT
IN NORTHERN EUROPE AND RUSSIA**



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Social Philosophies and Utopias
of the Enlightenment
in Northern Europe and Russia

Александровский институт университета Хельсинки
Санкт-Петербургский центр истории идей

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Социальная философия и утопии

Просвещения

в Северной Европе и России

Ответственные редакторы

Т.В. Артемьева, М.И. Микешин, В. Ойттинен



Санкт-Петербургский центр истории идей

Санкт-Петербург — Хельсинки
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The Aleksanteri Institute of the University of Helsinki
St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas

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THE NORTHERN LIGHTS Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia

Edited by
Tatiana Artemyeva, Mikhail Mikeshin, Vesa Oittinen



St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas

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Т.В. Артемьева, М.И. Микешин

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В 39-м выпуске альманаха «Философский век» опубликованы материалы международного научного симпозиума «Северное сияние: Социальная философия и утопия Просвещения в Северной Европе и России», проведенного 14–15 сентября 2012 г. в Александровском институте университета Хельсинки в сотрудничестве с Санкт-Петербургским центром истории идей. Симпозиум продолжил серию семинаров «Северное сияние», являющуюся составной частью проекта «Centre of Excellence» Александровского института, исследующего модернизационные процессы в России. Семинары «Северное сияние» изучают историческую роль мысли эпохи Просвещения и ее влияние на создание современных обществ в Скандинавии и России.

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CONTENTS

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|------------|
| Vesa Oittinen | Foreword: Enlightenment and Utopia | 9 |
| Tatiana Artemyeva | Alternative History as Utopia | 12 |
| Mikhail Mikeshin | The Vorontsov Brothers' Utopia of the Aristocratic Senate | 22 |
| Oili Pulkkinen | The Scottish Enlightenment and Utopian Political Thought: Genre and Context | 36 |
| Hartwig Frank | Von der Klarheit zur Mündigkeit. Zu den Implikationen eines Metaphernwechsels in der Aufklärung | 48 |
| Larisa Nikiforova | The Beehive Metaphor and the Amber Room in the Catherine Palace at Tsarskoye Selo | 63 |
| Pekka Hongisto | On Thomas Thorild and Utopias | 81 |
| Vesa Oittinen | The First Finnish Utopian? Gabriel Israel Hartman and His Poem to the Magisterial Promotion of 1805 | 102 |
| Maria Rakhmaninova | Zur Aktualität der Ideen der Aufklärung in Rußland und Deutschland am Beispiel von Kropotkins Kommunitarismus und Stirners Individualismus | 123 |
| Kimmo Sarje | Anders Chydenius's Rhetoric for the Freedom of Foreign Trade in Sweden in 1765 | 137 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|------------|
| Maren Jonasson | The Works of Anders Chydenius: A Springboard for Comparative Research | 154 |
| List of Contributors | | 166 |



СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------------|
| Веса Ойттинен | Предисловие: Просвещение и утопия | 9 |
| Татьяна Артемьева | Альтернативная история как утопия | 12 |
| Михаил Микешин | Аристократический сенат — утопия братьев Воронцовых | 22 |
| Ойли Пулккинен | Шотландское Просвещение и утопическая политическая мысль: жанр и контекст | 36 |
| Хартвиг Франк | От ясности к зрелости. О предпосылках изменения метафор в эпоху Просвещения | 48 |
| Лариса Никифорова | Метафора пчелиного улья и Янтарная комната Екатерининского дворца в Царском Селе | 63 |
| Пекка Хонгисто | О Томасе Торильде и утопиях | 81 |
| Веса Ойттинен | Первый финский утопист? Габриель Израель Хартман и его поэма на получение титула магистра в 1805 г. | 102 |
| Мария Рахманинова | Об актуальности идей Просвещения в России и Германии на примере коммунитарного анархизма Кропоткина и индивидуализма Штирнера | 123 |
| Киммо Сарье | Аргументы Андерса Чудениуса за свободу международной торговли в Швеции в 1765 г. | 137 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|------------|
| Марен Йонассон | Сочинения Андерса Чудениуса: трамплин для компаративного исследования | 154 |
| Список авторов | | 166 |



Foreword

ENLIGHTENMENT AND UTOPIA

Vesa Oittinen

Many historians of utopian thought do pass the Enlightenment age with a short mention, focusing instead on early utopias of Plato and Thomas More, or then on the socialist and communist ideas developed in the 19th and 20th centuries. One could, however, claim with good reason that the Enlightenment period, the 18th century, was the age of utopias *par excellence*. Not only utopias in the received sense were presented — that is, more or less fantastic descriptions of an ideal state of society or of “bright future,” — the whole Enlightenment project set off the seeking of alternatives to the order of *ancien régime*, and was in this sense “utopian.”

The Enlightenment is commonly seen as the “Age of Reason” and thus the stress on its Utopian moment may sound contradictory to this view. However, for the men living in the eighteenth century, rationalism and utopianism were not mutually exclusive modes of thought. On the contrary, it was just the Enlightenment rationalism which fostered utopian views and projects for an entirely new social order.

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This question is worth a closer look. We can take as starting point the well-known definitions of Karl Mannheim in his now classical work *Ideologie und Utopie* (1929). He distinguishes four fundamental forms of utopia: (i) the chiliastic movements, as represented e.g. by the Anabaptists in the 16th century; (ii) the liberal humanitarian idea; (iii) the conservative idea; (iv) the socialist-communist utopia. In this listing, the Enlightenment utopianism would mainly belong to the second category, although even some communist ideas were expressed, albeit in a very foggy manner.

But why did utopias play such a prominent role in the social thought of the Enlightenment? It seems that the answer is rather simple: the Enlightenment thinkers aimed at a new, more rational and more just social order than the existing hierarchical society with its estate privileges was, but such a new society did not yet exist nowhere. The present-day liberal democratic social order, which we nowadays — at least in the West — take for granted, existed in the 18th century only as blueprints in the works of the *philosophes*. The Enlightenment thinkers wanted a society which did not yet exist in the real world, and in this sense the core characteristics of utopian thought, which according to Mannheim consists in “ideas which transcend that which exists at the present,” is indeed applicable to most of the social projects of the epoch.

To repeat, this utopianism did not contradict the rationalism and criticism inherent to the spirit of the 18th century, on the contrary. One should not forget, that in the previous century, in the 1600s, the natural sciences were yet a similar utopian project. Men of early modern science, like Descartes and Galilei, were only beginning to apply the new methodological ideas on the research of natural phenomena and fell often into utopian visions — the most spectacular example of these is the idea of a *characteristica universalis* by Leibniz, which, according to him, should henceforth settle all scientific disputes. Indeed, the example of Leibniz specifically

demonstrates, how a strict rationalism and utopianism are able to go hand in hand.

* * *

The Aleksanteri Institute of the University of Helsinki and the St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas organized in 14–15 September 2012 a symposium on social philosophies and utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. The symposium, which had 14 speakers, was the second in a series of Russian and Finnish scholars discussing problems of the Enlightenment age. The previous symposium was held in 2009.

The 2012 symposium was opened by Prof. Markku Kangaspuuro, Director of the Research of the Aleksanteri Institute. While the papers by Tatiana Artemyeva, Hartwig Frank and Oili Pulkkinen dealt with more general problems of analyzing the Enlightenment thought in its relation to utopias, the other contributions focused on special case studies, and Maren Jonasson presented the project of collected works of the important Finnish enlightener Anders Chydenius.

Both the 2012 symposium and the coming ones will at the same time contribute to Aleksanteri Institute's Centre of Excellence research project on the modernization processes taking place in Russia.



ALTERNATIVE HISTORY AS UTOPIA

Tatiana Artemyeva

Le nez de Cléopâtre, s'il eût été plus court,
toute la face de la terre aurait change
Blaise Pascal

The content of “utopia” is much older than the name coined by Thomas More. It appeared in the time of Plato and Euhemerus and has not changed its general nature. I think we can consider “utopia” as one of the *unit-ideas* after Arthur Lovejoy or a *social archetype* and study it in the context of history of ideas.

The term belongs to both scholarly and everyday spheres. Dictionaries and encyclopedias usually give a general explanation of this phenomenon (in the *British Encyclopaedia* “Utopia” is “an ideal commonwealth whose inhabitants exist under seemingly perfect conditions. Hence ‘utopian’ and ‘utopianism’ are words used to denote visionary reform that tends to be impossibly idealistic.”¹) They describe Utopia in terms ideal (or even idealistic), mythological, paradisiacal, heavenly, etc., on the one hand, and critical, sa-

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¹ “Utopia,” in: *Encyclopædia Britannica* from Encyclopædia Britannica Premium Service <<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=76516>>.

tirical, pessimistic, on the other. The notion “utopian” is much wider than just an adjective and also has both positive and negative connotations.

In my article I deal with alternative historical models as with versions of utopianism, thus I can use approaches developed by Karl Popper and Richard Stites. Popper’s fundamental differentiation of historicism and historicism² is important for me, together with Stites’ interpretation of utopia as the key notion for ideology of bolshevism and theology of Stalinism.³ Stites correctly believes that utopia, as a basis of the revolutionary ideology, has expressed itself in various forms, and he demonstrates a possibility to analyze them.

Utopian projects are essential components of social philosophy, being a sphere of hypothetical speculations. The impossibility to realize them is first of all connected with an effort to imagine the complex social mechanism *ideally* as something to be expressed in a single act of thinking or describing. So, answering the question “What is a Utopia?” I conclude: “Utopia is a way of thinking about social ideals”.

We may see several ways of thinking about social ideals:

1. positive (utopia itself),
2. negative (anti-utopia),⁴
3. alternative (alternate history or uchronia, *l’uchronie*).

² Popper K. *The Poverty of Historicism* (2nd ed.). L., 1961.

³ Stites R. *Revolutionary Dreams. Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution*. N.Y., 1989.

⁴ It is interesting that Jeremy Bentham was a person who coined a special term for anti-utopia: ‘cacotopia’ (about 1818), later John Stuart Mill invented more successful synonym, ‘dystopia’ without any scatological connotations. It was done in a speech in the British House of Commons during the debate on the problem of land-ownership in Ireland. See: Trahair R. Introduction, in: *Utopias and Utopians. An Historical Dictionary*. Westport (Conn.): Greenwood Press, 1999. P. xii.

I consider alternative history as a special type of utopianism and I argue that considering alternative history as an *utopia*, but not as a *history*, may give us a possibility to understand better the epoch that produces such texts.

Historical studies, as any other research activity, are possible only as a creative process, thus the criterion of truth can be sacrificed to a refined method, ideological presuppositions, or political pressure. “Improved” or alternative history is set off against the “wrong” reality and becomes a certain kind of utopia.

Roman historian Titus Livius was the first professional who described a hypothetical line of the historical development. He proposed to consider what happened if Alexander the Great had not died at 33 and continued his conquest. In the ninth book of his *Ab urbe condita* he described Alexander’s would-be campaign against Rome in 323 BC. It, according to Livius, was not successful and ended by Alexander’s crushing defeat. Much later the great leader became a hero of Arnold Toynbee’s paper *If Ochus and Filip Had Lived on; If Alexander the Great Had Lived on*⁵ where possible historical consequences of both extension and shortening of Alexander’s and other historical figures’ lives were considered.

Eminent politicians, leaders, rulers, religious reformers are often regarded as movers of history, so it is tempting to model history by changing their biographies.⁶ Presumably, it is connected with a radical character of their activities and with unobvious results.

⁵ Toynbee A.J. “If Ochus and Filip Had Lived on; If Alexander the Great Had Lived on,” in: *Some Problems of Greek History*. Oxford, 1969.

⁶ Trevelyan G.M. “If Napoleon Had Won the Battle of Waterloo,” in: *Westminster Gazette*, July 1907; Fisher H.A.L. “If Napoleon had Escaped to America,” in: *If It Had Happened Otherwise: Lapses into Imaginary History*. Longmans, Green, 1931; Kunz D. “Camelot Revisited: What if John F. Kennedy Had Lived?” In: *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (ed. Niall Ferguson), 2000.

Despite rethinking of history has its own long story, the terminology for this process has started to form only recently, and is not finished yet.

In his paper *Of a History of Events Which Have Not Happened*⁷ British critic and writer Isaac Disraeli, while described possible events, used the expression “imaginary state.” Now, together with the most widespread one — “alternative history” — the following terms are used: “alternate history,” “contrafactual history,” “counterfactualism,” “experimental history,” “virtual history,” “retro-future story,” even “historical mannerism,”⁸ “alt-historical fantasy,” “allohistory” (“other history”), “uchronie.” The last notion was introduced by French philosopher Charles Renouvier in his essay *Uchronie (L’Utopie dans l’histoire)*, written in 1876.⁹ Renouvier considers “uchronie” as a situation outside the real time. Mikhail Epstein, in turn, underlines a etymological meaning of the notion as literally a period without time.¹⁰

Russian history has often been a testing ground for ideological experiments. Stories were rewritten, accents were changed, facts were reinterpreted, and heroes emerged and vanished. “Corresponding” heroes can always be found in history: in the epoch of enlightened Catherine II it was Princess Olga the Wise, in Stalin’s great and terrible epoch there were Peter the Great and Ivan the

⁷ Disraeli I. *Curiosities of Literature*. Moxon, 1849 <<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/d/disraeli/isaac/curiosities/complete.html#chapter205>>.

⁸ Экштут С.А. *На службе российскому Левиафану. Историческо-философские опыты*. М., 1997.

⁹ Renouvier Ch. *Uchronie (l’utopie dans l’histoire): Esquisse historique apocryphe du développement de la civilisation européenne tel qu’il n’a pas été, tel qu’il aurait pu être*. Paris, 1876. See also: Messac R. “Voyage en Uchronie, propos d’un Utopien,” in: *Les Primaires*. No. 83. Novembre, 1936.

¹⁰ Эпштейн М. “Ухрония,” in: *Проективный словарь философии*. СПб., 2003. P. 441.

Terrible. Today the past is studied with Evgeny Anisimov's *History of Russia from Rurik to Putin*.¹¹

Alternative assumptions and their utopian consequences were already realized by both storytellers and quite serious authors, for example, by Mikhail Shcherbatov in his *Russian History*.¹² In his analysis of Ivan the Terrible's setbacks in Livonian wars, he argues that one of their causes was the tsar's unbalanced character, when Ivan was fierce and vindictive instead of being friendly or at least restrained. According to Shcherbatov, excessive emotions can only become obstacles on the way of political success.

Shcherbatov blames Ivan the Terrible who, sating his vengeance, confirmed his reputation of a cutthroat tyrant. The historian puts in his text a special *Reflection on Ioann Vasilievich's Action*,¹³ where he discusses political moves missed by the tsar. Shcherbatov believes that Ivan the Terrible would be much more successful if he used religious controversies between Lithuania, Poland, and Livland, and made some political maneuvers instead of permanent wars.

His social utopia *Journey to the Land of Ophyr*¹⁴ represented Russian life as if the reforms of Peter the Great were improved by the next generations of rulers. Moving the capital from Peregab to Kvamo was the most signifying. We easily find in that anagrams the names of Russian capitals Petersburg and Moscow.

Because of removing the capital from the center of the empire, the emperor had lost the opportunity of direct contact with the people and their love. Removal of national shrines led to the destruction of moral ideals. Closeness to the borders of enemy states, frequent rebellions shook the throne, which therefore repeatedly

¹¹ Анисимов Е.В. *История России от Рюрика до Путина: Люди, события, даты*. СПб., 2010.

¹² Щербатов М.М. *История Российская от древнейших времен: в 7 т.* Т. 5. Ч. 2. СПб., 1786.

¹³ *Размышление о поступке Иоанна Васильевича.*

¹⁴ *Путешествие в землю Офирскую.*

passed from hand to hand. Shcherbatov almost literally repeating the arguments of the error transfer of the capital, which resulted in an article *Moscow's Petition about Its Falling into Oblivion*¹⁵ written in the form of a letter to Catherine II. It demonstrated that Russian history would be different without the artificial change of the place of the capital.

Shcherbatov was sure that social development may be accelerated. He even wrote *An Approximate Calculation How Many Years Russia Would Need to Reach Its Current State of Education and Glory without Autocracy of Peter the Great*.¹⁶ According to his calculations, it would be reached only to 1892.

In his critical pamphlet *On the Corruption of Morals in Russia*¹⁷ Shcherbatov analyzed the result of Peter the Great reforms. He was sure that they were necessary, but too untimely.

Peter the Great is the focusing center of alternative history models. Praising his personal contribution to enlightenment and development of the country made for politicians who followed him possible to use a logical method of “what if” speculation to overestimate their significance. One has just to build the simplest syllogism: “If Peter I had not existed, Russia would have been a backward country. Politician N acts like Peter I. Therefore, Russia will be a backward country without Politician N.” In this case, the syllogism is quite correct, but the first premise is false. To find historical links and parallels is a mighty method in political argumentation that allows transferring some qualities of a historical figure to an active political one.

Panegyric history was another type of utopian models. F.A. Emin (about 1735–1770) who was one of the brightest “history

¹⁵ *Прошение Москвы о забвении ея.*

¹⁶ *Примерное времяисчислительное положение, во сколько бы лет, при благополучнейших обстоятельствах, могла Россия сама собою, без самовластия Петра Великого, дойти до того состояния, в каком она ныне есть, в рассуждении просвещения и славы.*

¹⁷ *О повреждении нравов в России.*

writers” and the author of “political novels” is a good example. From 1767 till 1769 Emin published three volumes under the title *A Russian History of Lives of All Ancient Sovereigns from the Very Beginning, All Great and Worthy of the Eternal Memory Emperor Peter the Great’s Deeds, His Heiresses and Successors Who Followed Him That Includes a Description of the Golden Age in the North during the Reign of Catherine the Great*¹⁸. Reasoning about aims and tasks of any history, Emin remarked that it could not be just a list of facts or a description of political events. The main task of the historical writing as well as the work of art is “a direct instruction what one must follow and what one must avoid.”¹⁹ “The historical philosopher” can use both professional and artistic discourse. Emin confesses that he put into lips of his historical personages words they could say instead of those they said. He saturated his history with monologues and so made it theatrical like a play.

Historical events are used in the ideological struggle. Their interpretations saturate figurativeness of political vocabularies. Historical heroes are implanted in systems of ideals and moral values of any epoch.

The Russian political discourse is always oriented to “the glorious past”, though its interpretation is changed incessantly according to actual political needs.

Historians always analyze events and deeds, which are considered to be “key” ones, changes in which could turn the historical process “upside down.”²⁰ In this I see Russian historiosophical fa-

¹⁸ Эмин Ф.А. *Российская история жизни всех древних от самого начала России государей, все великия и вечной достойныя памяти императора Петра Великаго действия, его наследниц и наследников ему последование и описание в Севере златаго века во время царствования Екатерины Великой в себе заключающая*. СПб.: При Имп. Акад. наук, 1767–1769.

¹⁹ “...прямое наставление, чему следовать и чего убегать должно” (Ibid. Т. 1. С. V).

²⁰ See, for example: Бочаров А.В. *Проблема альтернативности исторического развития: историографические и методологические аспекты*. Авто-

talism and personologism, i.e. the exaggeration of contingency and importance of personal actions. Here is an incomplete list of such events:

- Prince Vladimir chooses the religion for his state (between Judaism, Islam, Byzantine Orthodoxy, and Catholicism);
- “The challenge of the East”: the Mongolian yoke and Dmitry Donskoy’s victory;
- “The challenge of the West”: the expansion of knight orders, the struggle with them and Alexander Nevsky’s role in it;
- The severe centralization under the aegis of Moscow or an independent development following suit of Novgorod feudal republic; Ivan Kalita;
- Ivan the Terrible’s *oprichnina* or the reforms of *Izbrannaia Rada*;
- The choice of claimants to the Russian throne at the beginning of the 17th century (boyar representatives, Polish Prince Wladislaw, Swedish Prince Charles-Philip, Mikhail Romanov);
- Peter I’s reforms or the traditional development of Russia under Sophia (Aleksey Mikhailovich);
- The successful plot of the Supreme Privy Council in 1730 and making of a constitutional monarchy or the development of absolutism; the role of Empress Anna Ioannovna;
- Catherine II’s liberalization or reinforcement of autocracy;
- The conquest of the Crimea or Catherine II’s reclamation of American lands;
- Napoleon’s possible victory in 1812 and possible changes in the political situation of Russia.²¹

Many historiosophical speculations and alternative projects have dealt with interpretations of these subjects.

реферат диссертации на соискание учёной степени кандидата исторических наук. Томск, 2002 <<http://klio.tsu.ru/contents.htm>>.

²¹ Ibid.

Dissatisfaction with history and hypothetical revision of its realities is one of the favorite topics of modern fiction and works of historians who, however, more often analyze missed opportunities rather than precluded consequences. Extreme forms, both utopian and anti-utopian, which presuppose the development of events according to optimal scenarios, are often presented as an analysis of possible variants of the social development.

Some of them are provided with super-positive (for example, the Baptism of Russia, the Petrine reforms) or super-negative (the Mongol-Tatar invasion) functions, and this allows seeing them as markers of qualitative changes. In the context of public mythology and changes in political orientations, some events, for example, the Decembrists uprising, Pugachev's peasant war, were radically re-evaluated. This fact brought about the belief that, in the end, "the class flair" or political expedience is the criterion of historical credibility. History is turned into a part of the political discourse and used for ideological purposes.

On May 19, 2009, the government of the Russian Federation decreed that a new President Commission "against attempts to falsify history to the detriment of Russia" should be established. It was presupposed that (to the detriment of common sense) the government knows what "the real" history is. This ideological casus has not only political, but also world-view reasons. It is based on the general vision of history and on the system of historiosophical archetypes that have been generated in history studies and teaching. It is also determined by the traditions of doing researches in history with the strong dependence of the state's support and approval. This is especially obvious at moments of social and ideological changes. Thus, among the most popular alternative history schemes now are descriptions of possible re-establishment of monarchy in Russia.

Alternative history has been studied, first of all, as a certain literary technique used in science fiction. Some of them were written in a form of historical narrative.

Studies in alternative history enable us to understand better some peculiarities of the Russian political discourse. The Russian — as earlier the Soviet, and even earlier the Imperial — political discourse is to the great extent orientated to hypothetical scenarios of the historical development. Any analysis of history is always accompanied by regret for lost opportunities (if the Great Patriotic War, Stalinist terror, Mongol invasion, and so on... had not happened) and by satisfaction in the decisions already made (Vladimir's choice of Christianity, Peter's choice of the orientation to Europe, etc.). Appraisals vary subject to the political situation, and this lead to changing in the historical vocabulary: "the Great October Socialist Revolution" turns into "the Bolsheviks revolt," "the developed socialism" (the period of L.I. Brezhnev's rule) becomes "the Stagnation Era," etc.

The study of alternative history will help to comprehend both the historical discourse, and the political discourse based on the first one. Boris Eltsin in his farewell speech on December 31, 1999, said that he had directed his efforts not to the past, but to the future.²² It sounds as if a politician can change the direction or dimension of time. Alternative history connotations in Russian politicians' discourse should be taken into account to understand the language of the official ideology.



²² Boris Eltsin's statement, December 31, 1999, the Kremlin, Moscow (the official TV broadcast): "Russia will never return into the past — Russia from now on will always move only forward. And I should not block this natural course of history" <http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/1999/12/31/0003_type82634_119554.shtml>.

THE VORONTSOV BROTHERS' UTOPIA OF THE ARISTOCRATIC SENATE

Mikhail Mikeschin

Alexander I succeeded to the throne in March 1801. He relied upon his four close young fellows Kochubey, Novosiltsev, Stroganov and Czartoryski, and united them into the “Secret” (or “Intimate,” or “Unofficial”) Committee. The body had no official status, but up to 1803 discussed almost all projects of reforms. The minutes of the first Secret Committee meeting are dated June 1801. Very soon after the first meeting, in July 1801, Alexander issued an invitation to the Senate to report to him on its rights. The emperor, the Senate and the Secret Committee were all agreed on the need for reform, but each party had different ideas on its nature. The general problem facing them was whether the Senate should have administrative, judiciary or legislative powers, or whether it should combine all three.¹

At the beginning of Alexander's reign there were other groups in St. Petersburg with which the emperor kept in close touch. One of them was “*the Senatorial party*.” This party was hardly more

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 22–35.

¹ Narkiewicz O.A. “Alexander I and the Senate Reform,” in: *The Slavonic and East European Review*. Vol. 47. No. 108 (Jan., 1969). P. 121.

than a group of old friends, who had all served under the Empress Catherine, and who had been educated in accordance with the enlightened principles of the 18th-century philosophers. These men had one other thing in common: none of them took part in the grimmer excesses of Paul's reign. The Senatorial party consisted of men who were aristocratic, and who were untainted by any association with the favorites of either Catherine or Paul. Their experience of state matters made them valuable to a young sovereign.

The founder of this informal party, Prince Bezborodko, for many years chancellor and Catherine's *factotum*, was already dead when Alexander I succeeded to the throne. From the other members the most vocal were the *brothers Aleksandr and Simon Vorontsov*. The former was for a long time a kind of a minister of Russian commerce, he had western European leanings and was considered a liberal. The latter had for long been Russian ambassador to the court of St James', and became a convinced supporter of the British system of government. He admired the English aristocratic way of life and later became domiciled in England. On Alexander's accession he returned to St Petersburg for a long visit and took part in the talks on the Senate reform. Simon was the only member of the group not to belong to the Senate. The two Vorontsovs were very friendly with some members of the Secret Committee. However, there was a fight of several court groups for influence over the emperor,² and Alexander was often portrayed as weak and a sincere liberal who did not know how to use his autocratic powers. The senatorial party has often been treated as a significant force, led by experienced and influential statesmen.³

Members of the Senatorial party argued that a reformed Senate would provide the foundation for a freer and more law-abiding form of government. The senators quickly submitted their projects

² Narkiewicz O.A. "Alexander I and the Senate Reform." P. 120–121.

³ McConnell A. "Alexander I's Hundred Days: The Politics of a Paternalist Reformer," in: *Slavic Review*. Vol. 28. No. 3 (Sep., 1969). P. 389–390.

for the emperor's consideration. Five in all were discussed by the Secret Committee, and these were drawn up independently of the Senate's own report. The first project to be discussed was Aleksandr Vorontsov's memorandum.⁴

Historians have been interested in the Senatorial party largely because its members were senior government officials united by a common belief in the potential importance of the Russian Senate and because its program seemed to embody a sort of muddled aristocratic liberalism of a kind familiar in eighteenth-century Europe. The Senatorial party claimed that a powerful Senate could check "Despotism" and preserve the "Rule of Law." They even proposed that the Senate be granted a "Right of Remonstrance" which was at first sight analogous to that of the eighteenth-century French Parliaments. "Thus, the Senatorial party seems to fit well into the long-established historiographical tradition which sees the political history of Imperial Russia as a long series of attempts to Westernize the autocracy by limiting its authority."⁵

Historians from Karamzin onwards have argued that the Senatorial party hoped to curb the powers of the autocracy. This view has been summarized by Marc Raeff. He argues that the Senatorial party "proposed to give the dominant role in the government to the higher nobility by re-establishing the Senate [...] as the highest executive organ and by granting it a consultative voice and limited power of initiative in the legislative process [...] In this manner, without specifically restricting the absolute power of the monarch, the Senate would obtain effective means for safeguarding the 'fundamental laws' of the realm; that is, the rights and privileges of the various classes of the Russian people, most particularly, of course,

⁴ Narkiewicz O.A. "Alexander I and the Senate Reform." P. 122.

⁵ Christian D. "The 'Senatorial Party' and the Theory of Collegial Government, 1801–1803," in: *Russian Review*. Vol. 38. No. 3 (Jul., 1979). P. 298–300.

those of the nobility. These proposals were quite clearly the basis for an aristocratic, oligarchic ‘constitution’.”⁶

“However, a close examination of the various reform projects submitted by members of the Senatorial party shows that this interpretation does not work.”⁷ In reality the European analogy is misleading. It obscures the peculiarly Russian nature of the Senatorial party’s political ideas and of its political behavior. The political behavior of the Senatorial party must be distinguished from that of European political parties. In the same way, the ideas which united the members of the Senatorial party can only be understood when distinguished from the European terminology in which they were expressed.

The politics of eighteenth-century Russia can best be seen as a series of conflicts between rival clientele groups. The “Senatorial party” was not really a party at all, in the European sense of the term. Rather, it was a small clientele group. The real ties between its members were personal rather than ideological, and their real ambition was not to implement a political program, but rather to secure the only significant political prize attainable in an autocracy, namely the right to advise and therefore influence the autocratic monarch, the source of all real power and influence.

In the *first* place, the members of the Senatorial party kept insisting that they accepted the need for an autocratic government. They believed that Russia is an autocratic state. “*Second*, none of their proposals, not even the celebrated ‘Right of Remonstrance’, could have created any practical restraints on the powers of the autocracy. The ‘Right of Remonstrance’ was borrowed from the *Nakaz* of Catherine II, and it was intended merely to allow the Senate to make suggestions which the monarch could accept or reject. Besides, the members of the Senatorial party suggested no

⁶ Raeff M. *Michael Speransky: Statesman of Imperial Russia, 1772–1838*. The Hague, 1957. P. 35, 36.

⁷ Christian D. “The ‘Senatorial Party’.” P. 301.

way of increasing the nobility's influence in the Senate. On the contrary, they were quite content for the monarch to continue appointing its members, as in the past. *Third*, it is not even possible to claim that they intended to create certain procedural limitations on the monarch's power. Certainly, they hoped the monarch would exercise his authority exclusively through the Senate. But there was no way that such procedures could bind the monarch."⁸

The language the members of the Senatorial party used to describe their plans was extremely ambiguous. Their vocabulary owed much to Catherine II's *Nakaz* of 1767. She, in turn, borrowed the language of European political thought of the early eighteenth century, and introduced it into official usage. At first sight, the members of the Senatorial party seem to be using this language in usual European ways of that time. "Particularly striking was their use of the emotive words *Law*, *Right*, and *Despotism*. They claimed that the Senate was a bulwark against Despotism, a guarantor of the Law and a defender of the Rights of the people. Further, to enable the Senate to exercise this role effectively, they argued that it was necessary to restore to it certain basic Rights which had been allowed to lapse."⁹ However, they used each of these key words in unfamiliar ways. Neither word, remarked D. Christian, was used in a definite, universally accepted sense in the European discussions of this period.

For instance, Western conceptions of Law were not accepted or specifically interpreted by the members of the Senatorial party. For them civil obligations were both rights and duties: rights over inferiors and duties towards superiors. It was impossible to conceive of rights over superiors, the kind of rights enshrined in the French Declaration of Rights and the American Bill of Rights. On the contrary, it was taken for granted that all Rights were delegated and could therefore be freely retracted by those who had delegated

⁸ Ibid. P. 301.

⁹ Ibid. P. 302.

them. Rights, like Laws, were an expression of the autocratic will and could be freely altered or even cancelled by that will. Obviously, this conception of Laws and of Rights was not merely perfectly compatible with a belief in autocratic government; it was a logical consequence of that belief. Similarly, the “Rule of Law” meant not that the autocrat should conform to some higher authority than his own, but rather that his own agents should abide strictly by the commands he issued to them. By the “Rule of Law,” they understood the rule of the decrees issued by the autocrat.

The members of the Senatorial party habitually put the word “Despot” to a use, typified in Simon Vorontsov’s phrase, “ministerial Despotism.” When the words “Despot” or “Despotism” were used by the members of the Senatorial party, they refer not to the behavior of the monarch, but to the arbitrary behavior of his officials. Alexander Vorontsov wrote, for instance, that

If the various aspects of government are each entrusted [by the autocrat] to a particular individual... all will be driven by despotism and arbitrariness... and the autocratic power will burden itself... with the need to continually check the abuses and caprices of each part. Such is the government of viziers and pashas.

“Despotism” in this sense meant *the behavior of government officials* who ignored, flouted or twisted the Laws issued by their monarch. “The conviction that there was no authority higher than the autocrat forced the members of the Senatorial party to interpret each of these words very differently from the European thinkers for whom Natural Law, Divine Law, or even the Will of the People, were higher authorities than the monarch.”¹⁰

Why should the members of the Senatorial party have used these words in such a way? A Western historian believes, that “the main reason <...> is that the language itself was inadequate to the

¹⁰ Ibid. P. 305.

task of reform. Russian politics was fundamentally different from that of Western Europe, and yet Russia had never developed a tradition of political theory designed to cope with the peculiarities of autocratic politics.” The politicians had “to stretch the language, as the members of the Senatorial party did, to fit the realities of Russian politics.”¹¹ Moreover, they not only made these words as blueprints from French, they conducted their political discussions mostly in French.

It was a matter-of-fact and quite clear-sighted discussion of some typically Russian political problems. The writings of the Senatorial party contained a coherent set of ideas about the nature of autocratic government, the main weaknesses to which it was prone, and the best ways of combating these weaknesses. Their political ideas started from the axiom that Russia must have an autocratic ruler. As Alexander Vorontsov wrote in July 1801, “Large and populous states cannot be governed except by autocratic [*samoderzhavnymi*] Monarchs.”¹² He and his colleagues did comments that show they accepted Montesquieu’s view that a large country such as Russia should essentially have a despotic government. Simon Vorontsov warned against limiting the Russian autocracy in following words:

To introduce such fundamental changes in the largest Empire in the universe, amongst a population of more than 30 millions, in a nation ill prepared, ignorant and corrupt, and at a time when there is political unrest over the whole continent, would be to bring about the collapse of the throne and the dissolution of the Empire.¹³

¹¹ Ibid. P. 306.

¹² *Sbornik Arkheologicheskogo Instituta*. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg, 1878. Otd. 2. P. 157.

¹³ Simon Vorontsov’s letter to his brother Alexander written in London on June 14 (26), 1801, in: *Arkhib kniazia Vorontsova*. Vol. 10. M., 1876. P. 98–102.

It means that the brothers adopted an essentially pragmatic argument, and they did not reject the idea of limited monarchy in principle. They believed, however, that in Russia at that very time any attempt to introduce such a government would be disastrous. It would be as stupid and irrelevant, as to abolish serfdom right away.

Thus, the idea of limiting monarchical authority was completely out of their attention. Instead the members of the Senatorial party focused on a number of issues central in the autocratic politics of Russia. What chiefly concerned them was a problem arising out of the very nature of autocratic government — *the difficulty of delegating the autocratic power of the monarch without losing it*. In theory, the powers of the autocrat were limitless. In practice, however, one individual could only exercise a very limited authority, particularly in a country as vast as Russia.¹⁴ The structure of power lacked an essential mechanism.

“The danger they saw was that the political power concentrated in the hands of the autocratic monarch could all too easily slip from his grasp. The members of the Senatorial party had their own explanation of this phenomenon. They argued that it was particularly liable to happen if the Emperor relied exclusively on the advice of a small number of favorites.”¹⁵ In a letter to the Emperor written in the summer of 1801, Simon Vorontsov put it more forcefully:

How can Your Imperial Majesty be sure of not being seduced deliberately or unconsciously into error by [Your Ministers]? How can You know if they are presenting all that ought to be brought to Your attention? How can You be sure that Your orders have been executed strictly according to their intent?¹⁶

¹⁴ The problem still very painful in the country.

¹⁵ Christian D. “The ‘Senatorial Party’.” P. 308.

¹⁶ *Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova*. Vol. 10. P. 394.

It was only a short step from ignorance to weakness. If the truth was hidden from the autocrat then he had no guarantee that his will was being carried out, that his laws were being obeyed. The vision of the autocrat would be obscured, his own bureaucracy would become opaque to him and he would no longer know either how it operated or how it executed his orders. With his own officials manipulating the information reaching him, the monarch would find himself powerless, stranded in a sort of vast Potemkin village created by his own bureaucracy. But it was not only the autocrat who suffered under such conditions, for, the brothers continued, once he ceased to be the real source of power, the vast concentration of authority available to him would devolve upon other men who had no broad perspectives, no sense of general responsibilities, and no conception of duties higher than those of self-interest.

All information reached the Russian tsar through a single bureaucracy interested in presenting its actions in the best light possible. Thus, the paradoxical result of his unlimited authority was that the Russian autocrat was very much dependent on the advice of his own officials, so dependent, indeed, that he could on occasion become their captive.¹⁷

The members of the Senatorial party proposed a solution that is quite usual for those who want to start forward: they proposed to return to the initial, “genuine” structure of the Russian power. They found it in the “Spiritual Regulation” issued by Peter the Great in 1721 and written by Feofan (Prokopovich). It contained a general description of the collegial institutions Peter the Great had been creating during the last few years of his reign. And it was in this system, headed by one supreme college, the Senate, that the members of the Senatorial party saw a model solution to the problems that concerned them. It is because of this that their proposals look as essentially conservative. Peter the Great, the members of the Senatorial party believed, was well aware that ministerial des-

¹⁷ Christian D. “The ‘Senatorial Party’.” P. 308–311.

potism was inevitable wherever the monarch relied on the private advice of individual officials. Peter the Great “realized that a large country could not possibly be administered by the Sovereign alone. But to entrust this administration to 10 or 12 individuals subject to no control would do nothing but create 10 or 12 despots who through human nature would inevitably abuse their power.”¹⁸

The logical solution was to appoint groups of officials collectively responsible for the decisions they took. Alexander Vorontsov (following Feofan) argued that those appointed to such institutions would be obliged to take a broader, more considered, and less self-interested view of their tasks. Each individual would act as watchdog over his colleagues, and they would all be exposed to the searching glare of a sort of *artificial public* consisting of other members of the college. This was an attempt to solve within a *single bureaucracy* the problems solved in Western Europe by the clash between rival groups.¹⁹ The collegial principle was also intended to ensure that the bureaucracy remained transparent to the monarch. In theory he would always be able to observe its workings clearly and to see through it to the real condition of the people over whom he ruled. It was in this sense that the members of the Senatorial party occasionally described the Senate as a “mediating power,” using another phrase from the language of Montesquieu.

For the Vorontsov brothers and other members of the Senatorial party, the main task of reform was to turn to a conservative utopia, that is to (re)establish a bureaucracy in which each link consisted of a group of individuals, a Petrine “college,” which would necessarily act in conformity with the wishes and interests of the monarch. The Senate, as they believed it had been in the time of Peter the Great, would crown the system, coordinate and supervise the work of the colleges. Thus, the Senatorial party’s design in fact

¹⁸ Letter of Simon Vorontsov to Kochubei, 1801, in: *Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova*. Vol. 10. P. 441–452.

¹⁹ Christian D. “The ‘Senatorial Party’.” P. 312.

was to increase the monarch's power by increasing his control over the bureaucracy through which it was transmitted.

The proposed solution to the problem of ministerial despotism was not at all strong. The administrative history of the eighteenth century showed its weak points. The collegial institutions founded by Peter the Great all without any exception tended to *shrug off responsibility* on to some persons who then were glad to monopolize the authorities of these institutions. "As Speranskii argued later, collegial institutions were in any case not well adapted to the executive functions which the Senatorial party hoped they could fulfill. Like all large committees, they were poor at initiating policy and they reacted very slowly when quick or merely routine decisions had to be taken. They were, however, [...] well adapted to the essentially passive tasks characteristic of judicial institutions, and it is because of this that the various collegial institutions, and in particular the Senate, had transformed themselves so naturally into judicial institutions."²⁰

The political behavior of the Senatorial party members was peculiarly characteristic of an autocratic political system. They knew that in reality it was impractical to insist upon their ideas, they were of course ready to accept some compromise if proposed by the tsar. They hoped that the battle under the banner of "We are for collegial institutions!" with their opponents would give them personally a preponderant influence in the new system of government, the monarch taking their side, for they presumably had the best methods to support and strengthen the efficiency of the autocracy. The underlying conflict was about who would be appointed to run the reformed bureaucracy.

The Emperor had at first been extremely enthusiastic about the idea of a reform of the Senate. The members of the Senatorial party were quite influential, therefore, if their advice had been taken, its immediate effect would have been to reduce the influence of the

²⁰ Ibid. P. 313.

Secret Committee and bring the members of the Senatorial party within the circle of advisors which ultimately determined the policies of the Russian government.

At some moment the tsar made some appointments to fill vacancies in newly established ministries. The majority of members of the Senatorial party filled main positions in them. These members immediately lost their former perspective, because they achieved their main goal — to take the most important control positions near the tsar. The problem of ministerial despotism ceased to appear so urgent for Alexander Vorontsov and others. Only Simon retained his theoretical outlook because he remained in his former position.

The political behavior of the Senatorial party, like its political program, can be understood when seen in its context. It becomes clear that the Senatorial party, like most of the other informal groupings which were so characteristic of autocratic policies, was fighting above all for access to the monarch. Their program was designed to secure this end. However, D. Christian believes that the program was more than a mask for their ambitions; it was designed to sustain the authority of the monarch whose advisors they wished to become, and it was based on an intimate knowledge of the workings of the bureaucratic machinery through which that authority was exercised.²¹

Within a month of issuing the decree initiating the reform debates the Secret Committee made its retaliatory move. Alexander I had been persuaded by its members that he had behaved impulsively. Its detailed memorandum argued that the real task facing the Emperor was to create barriers not simply to the despotism of ministers but to the use of his own autocratic powers, so the Senatorial reform was merely an irrelevance.²²

²¹ Ibid. P. 322.

²² Ibid. P. 316.

In February 1802 Czartoryski presented to the Secret Committee a plan for the establishment of an executive machinery consisting of a number of formally constituted ministries. The “proposal shows that he and his colleagues had now come to accept some of the arguments in favor of collegial government. As a result they adopted from the start the principle that the new ministries should be subjected to the authority of various collegial bodies including the Senate.”²³ But they appear to have gone even further in their compromise with the notion of collegiality. They decided that the ministers as a group should be organized in a separate collegial institution, a Committee of Ministers, to which they were obliged to submit any proposals before presenting them to the Emperor. It was because of the extent to which they incorporated the collegial principle that Simon Vorontsov could regard the reforms as a modest triumph for his party.

“Clearly, then, the fate of the collegial principle after the reforms would depend on the success with which the collegial institutions managed to enforce their control over the ministers. And it soon became clear that in practice the collegial institutions would be powerless. [...] The Committee of Ministers survived for over a century, but while retaining considerable influence, it never managed to prevent ministers from establishing private, ‘individual’ contacts with the Emperor. [...] Thus, within a year or two of the reforms, it was already clear that the hopes of the Senatorial party would not be realized.”²⁴

Why did the reforms fail? A possible explanation was suggested by Simon Vorontsov in his letters in 1803.²⁵ The younger brother felt that the basic principles of the Senatorial party remained valid. Indeed he argued that they contained, in the notion of “ministerial despotism,” a perfectly adequate explanation for the failure of the

²³ Ibid. P. 317.

²⁴ Ibid. P. 319.

²⁵ *Arkhiv kniazia Vorontsova*. Vol. 6. M., 1873. P. 441–452.

reforms. Newly appointed ministers had simply succumbed to the pleasures of ministerial authority. They now enjoyed regular access to the monarch and were determined that no collegial body should limit their freedom of action. As a result they had systematically destroyed the supervisory powers granted to the Senate.



THE SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT AND UTOPIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: GENRE AND CONTEXT

Oili Pulkkinen

Utopian political thought is rarely linked with the Scottish Enlightenment, which is often called a Newtonian Enlightenment because of its attempts to apply the experimental method to the human sciences. David Hume and Adam Smith in particular attempted to introduce a natural history of man, or science of man, as a body of knowledge that covered several branches of human life. The scientific approach to human life would appear to be incompatible with the notion of ‘utopia’, a place, state or a condition with perfect political laws, customs and social conditions, or alternatively, an ideal but imaginary political or social system.

The word itself was rare in Scottish philosophy; it was used by only Thomas Reid in his unpublished papers, in a section entitled ‘Some Thoughts on the Utopian System’.¹ Scottish intellectuals

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 36–47.

¹Published in: Reid T. *Practical Ethics: Being Lectures on Natural Religion, Self-Government, Natural Jurisprudence, and the Law of Nations*. Ed. from the manuscripts and introd. Knud Haakonssen. Princeton, N. J., Princeton UP, 1990. I refer to this edition.

mostly wrote about the best possible form of a society (a commonwealth) rather than a utopia. In this paper I shall read these texts by contextualizing them within the utopian genre.

Craig Smith has addressed the question of utopian political thought, especially millenarianism, stating that in Scotland there was some difference between Scottish political thought, especially Presbyterian and Calvinist political thought, which were reflected for example in the National Covenant, on the one hand, and eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosophy on the other.¹ I further suggest that the roots of eighteenth-century utopian political thought lay not in the Reformation but in the classical, and in particular the Platonic, tradition of political philosophy. In this paper I shall construct the link between classical political theory and utopian political thinking in Scottish philosophy.

The most famous descriptions of a utopia in Western political thought are Thomas Moore's *Utopia* and James Harrington's *Oceana*, both of them still controversial treatises in political philosophy. They were an important source of political theorizing and were republished several times in the 18th century. The eighteenth-century editions were often just republications of previous translations with prefaces by the original translators and editors. This may mean that the prefaces were already more or less archaic at the time of publication. Despite this, the introductions may tell us something about the reception of these works.

The Biblical New Jerusalem as a Political Utopia?

One source for the social utopias can be found in the Bible, especially the Biblical Judeo-Christian theocracy after the future re-incarnation of Jesus Christ. Craig Smith has made a distinction be-

¹ Smith C. "Great Reformation in the Manners of Mankind": Utopian Thought in the Scottish Reformation and Enlightenment', *Utopian Studies* 2:16 (2005). P. 221–245.

tween Christian millenarian expectations about the future state of God and the eighteenth-century political and social utopias. The Christian vision predicts the divine, perfect state of life to come without any detailed description of that state, whereas the political utopias speculated about and constructed the most perfect social and political system.¹ The eighteenth-century political utopias were often secular; there was no explicit Divinity, and they reflected various modes of scepticism rather than Christian belief.² The eighteenth-century intellectuals are known far more for their deistic and even sceptic views than for their acceptance of Christian theology. Several Scottish philosophers, even those with a Christian background, detached themselves from the fundamental Biblical prophecies of the future and held that the Bible was not the sole arbiter of good and evil in society.

More's Utopia: From Political Atlantis to Daily Politics

The English translation of More's *De Optimo Republicae Statu deque Nova Insula Utopia* (1516) was republished several times in the 18th century, based on the translation and preface by Gilbert Burnet; the preface dealt mainly with the process of translating and the progress of language.³ The book was written for the amusement of its readers; this statement reflected the classical idea that only free citizens (men) were able to engage in politics because they did not have to work to fulfill their primary needs (p. 43). In the *Epistle* the author wrote that Utopia was part of a recently found world (p. 6); the reference to the discovery of America was clear to 18th-century readers (p. 42). According to the narrator, it was a work of political fiction (p. 41), although so well written that some might take it for the truth. The author/narrator often referred

¹ Smith C. "Great Reformation in the Manners of Mankind" ...' P. 224.

² Ibid. P. 233.

³ I refer to the edition published in Dublin in 1737, unless otherwise stated.

to Plato's *Republic*, translating it as "common-wealth", and the book covered the history of manners, constitutions and laws in that commonwealth (p. 37). The word *optimo* was translated as complete rather than optimal, perfect or the best (ed. 1751, title page). Moreover, Utopia was defined as the "singular good common-wealth" (1743, XV).

As modern readers, we can claim that More argued against the ambitious desire of private property. However, in his preface (p. VIII), Burnet claimed that More did not wholeheartedly defend the rejection of private property, which was the basis of his *Utopia*. This was a fundamental question in eighteenth-century political theory: according to the Scottish philosophers, the human desire for private property and wealth was the motor of economic development and the progress of civic virtue.

More's *Utopia* was seen in the context of sixteenth-century politics; for example, Burnet suggested that More was so cautious on the subject of marriage because as a Member of the House of Commons he was against King Henry VIII's proposal for the marriage contract of his daughter Margaret. Although *Utopia* was a work of political speculation, some references to sixteenth-century political life were detected and reflected or revised in the eighteenth-century translations. Although More's *Utopia* was a state (both geographically and politically) that did not exist, the book itself also seemed to reflect some general problems in British politics, which represented common issues in the political systems that then existed in Europe (p. 7).

Harrington's Oceana

Another well-known political utopia in Western political thought was James Harrington's *Oceana*, republished in 1737, 1758 and 1771 with a preface written by John Toland in 1699–1700. J.G.A. Pocock's famous modern edition of Harrington's

Oceana is based on Toland's editions.¹ In the preface, Pocock states that Harrington combined 17th-century republican ideals, especially civic humanism, with a Machiavellian *reason of state*.² According to Toland, Harrington described the "good polity," a society that was admirably constituted and thus "produced [...] great and excellent men" (1737, V). He continued by stating that Harrington's model of a commonwealth was based on holistic views of society, not just one branch of learning and science (ibid.).

Toland extolled the seventeenth-century state of liberty, pluralism, trade, colonial commerce, luxury and enlightened manners in Britain, but he also mentions the change in military virtue. For Harrington, each citizen was connected to the state by military citizenship. Pocock describes Harrington's principle of citizenship: "...the individual's political capacity depended upon his capacity to his ability to bear, and to possess, the arms to be exercised for common cause."³ This kind of political ideal originated from the practice of small states in Greece during the classical era, and was often seen, as it was by Harrington, as an alternative to a standing army, which was regarded as economically impossible. In this kind of system, for Harrington, corruption (of the citizen) was the most serious threat to civic virtue. In the 18th century, the political impact of luxury (the consumption of luxury items exceeding primary needs for convenience and societal status) was discussed, and the classical conception of luxury as corruption was contested by Hume. In the culture of the Enlightenment, luxury was more a source of civilized manners than a threat to virtuous citizenship, and Harrington's *Oceana* was criticized for its agrarian principles; again utopian economics was seen as problematic or inapplica-

¹ *The Political Works of James Harrington*, ed. J.G.A Pocock (1977, CUP, Cambridge). Page numbers refer to J.G.A. Pocock's 'Historical Introduction' to this edition. P. 1–152.

² Ibid. P. 124.

³ Ibid. P. 131.

ble in the commercial society of the 18th century and the British Empire.

Toland (1737, IX) constructed a link between *Oceana* and Plato's *Republic* by comparing Plato's heathen commonwealth to Harrington's "Christian" utopia. Toland suggested that in his *Oceana* Harrington had proposed a new political system based on Roman ideals for Britain. Toland further claimed that Harrington's political vision was so different from the existing British political system that there was nothing left of the latter at the 'national level' except the local government of the city of London. Seventeenth-century London seemed to be (the equivalent of republican) classical Rome; in his Dedication to the Lord Mayor, Alderman, Sheriffs, and Common Council of London, Toland appraised politically and economically flourishing London and continued: "*London... well deserves the name of a New Rome in the West, and like the old one, to become Sovereign Mistress of the Universe/ THE Government of the City is so wisely and completely contriv'd, that HARRINGTON made very few alterations in it, tho in all the other parts of our National Constitution he scarce left any thing as he found it*" (p. IV).

Thomas Reid on Utopian Political Thought

In his posthumously published manuscript on the utopian political system, Thomas Reid mentioned¹ Thomas More and connected utopian political thought with classical philosophy by dividing political theory into the speculative and the practical, which had to be distinguished from each other. The former concerned the best form of government for the improvement and happiness of man, while the latter concerned the variants of and changes in real political systems.² The distinction is the same as that which Plato made in

¹ Reid T. *Practical Ethics*... P. 283.

² Ibid. P. 277.

The Republic and *The Laws*: in the former Plato reconstructed the ideally best political system and in the latter he introduced political systems that were humanly as good as possible. After a lengthy section containing several passages on the superiority of a peaceful, gradual alteration of political systems over violent revolutions, Reid turns to a discussion of speculative systems.¹ Reid defined “speculative theorizing” as a method of reasoning in which the systems concerned may not have existed or would not exist in the future and were thus most impracticable and inapplicable. Speculative theorizing itself was useful in that it enhanced human wisdom; it extended the human understanding of political systems and could even facilitate the introduction of new conceptualizations and views about political matters.² However, people should be careful in applying the speculative principles of the utopian system, since “[w]e cannot borrow Examples from Utopian Governments, because no Nation was ever so governed,”³ and thus we are unsure of the effects of such political principles; human behavior is a complicated phenomenon, and it is impossible to predict. In general, political reasoning attains to probabilities, not demonstration.

The utopian models should, according to Reid, answer three questions concerning political systems. 1) How to improve the human mind so that the members of a political system could make the distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice? 2) How to decrease criminal conduct in society? And 3) how should public merits and ranks be justly allocated in society, especially with regard to the social status or labor of the members of that society?⁴ In practice, the utopian system analyses various means to organize human society and control human passions, especially the desire of private property, by means of education and legislation. In the best

¹ Ibid. P. 280–1.

² Ibid. P. 281.

³ Ibid. P. 297.

⁴ Ibid. P. 283.

political system, there should not be any conflict between private and public interests.¹

***Hume's essay 'Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth'
and the Utopian Genre***

Hume wrote an essay on the idea of a perfect commonwealth in order to “revive” the political debate on the topic. He mentioned Plato’s *Republic*, More’s *Utopia* and Harrington’s *Oceana* as remarkable contributions to this genre, and Harrington’s model of the best form of government as the most valuable utopian model ever published in Britain.² However, he claimed that there were a few defects in Harrington’s political system: the proposed rotation of posts, its agrarian economy and its insecure provisions for liberty.

For Hume, the best form of government was a system in which the individual features of the people, culture or nature, including natural resources, did not affect the system.³ The best form of government was more like a mechanism than an application of the most appropriate political system. As the best possible commonwealth, Hume proposed a political system of a mixed form of government or limited monarchy, in which separate democratic counties, small republican bodies, were firmly united under one government. Unlike many of his contemporaries who regarded the Greek idea of the small *polis* the best one, he did not ascribe to the idea that an ideal political system was not possible in large states, like France or Britain.⁴ His ideal political system was characterized by adequate representation and powerful central government.⁵

¹ Ibid. P. 287.

² Hume D. *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects. I–II*, (1764, London/Edinburgh), vol. I. P. 541. It is noteworthy that Hume referred to Plato’s *The Republic* as an “imaginary republic” in the footnotes to his essay *Of Civil Liberty*.

³ Ibid. P. 540.

⁴ Ibid. P. 551, 554–6.

⁵ Ibid. P. 552–3.

According to Hume, his ideal model was almost perfect, although some problems still remained concerning the status of the sovereign and the militia.¹ Although Hume was not able to present an immaculate political system, he stated that in Sweden there was a balance between limited monarchy, regular government and a standing army, and thus the Swedish political system was “less dangerous than British.”²

Although Reid’s and Hume’s descriptions of political utopias were almost contrary to each other, they had one common feature: Hume, too, claimed that the establishment of the best possible political system was impeded by numerous personal attributes, especially human ambition; he wrote, for example: “We know not to what lengths enthusiasm, or other extraordinary motions of the human mind, may transport men, to neglect of all order and public good.”³ In addition to their nature as imaginary political systems without existence in spatial or temporal reality, there is another weakness in models of utopian political thought. For Reid, utopian political systems were impossibilities precisely because the human condition was deeply dependent on improvement by trial and error, which required “temptation”, private desires and interests, and as a utopian political system was already the best possible one, there was no role for this kind of development in it.⁴ Adam Smith, too, arrived at the conclusion that it would be impossible to implement More’s *Utopia* or Harrington’s *Oceana*; private interests, which nurtured economic progress, made More’s political utopia impossible.⁵

¹ Ibid. P. 553–4.

² Ibid. P. 554.

³ Ibid. P. 555–6.

⁴ Reid T. *Practical Ethics*... P. 297–8.

⁵ “To expect, indeed, that the freedom of trade should ever be entirely restored in Great Britain, is as absurd as to expect Oceana or Utopia be established in it. Not only the prejudices of the publick, but what is more unconquerable, the private interests of many individuals, irresistibly oppose it” (Cited from Craig

Utopias and Eighteenth-Century Political Science

As already mentioned, the Scottish philosophers, apart from Thomas Reid, did not explicitly write about political utopias but about the best possible political systems or commonwealths. These political constructions were introduced as an element of the academic discipline of political science.

“Political science” is a somewhat vague term in the Scottish Enlightenment; usually it was described as subordinate to moral philosophy and laws, interwoven together under the discipline of the natural history of man, or, as Hume called it, the science of man. However, if we take a closer look at the elementary lectures on political science, politics was almost always located at the end of the lectures, after sections dealing with man as a psycho-social creature and the philosophical foundations of jurisprudence. Political utopias — constructions of the best political systems — often completed the section on politics. Despite the theoretico-philosophical differences that existed between Scottish (academic) philosophers, the written scheme of the lectures on moral sciences, politics and the best political system often follows the same pattern; constructions of the ideal political systems were a crucial part of elementary lectures in eighteenth-century political science.

Hume called the ideal commonwealth as an “immortal form of government.”¹ In classical political theory, the demise of a political body (a state) was unavoidable: political life followed the same kind of pattern as natural life: from birth to adolescence, maturity, decay and death. For Hume, a political utopia, if it could be real-

Smith 2005, 234). Craig Smith argues that Scottish political thought, which was based on empiricism and scepticism, opposed the utopian system, but here Adam Smith was presenting Utopia and Oceana as any models of a political society based on (faulty) political reasoning. The criticism is directed not against utopian political thought itself but against the particular principles introduced in More’s *Utopia* and Harrington’s *Oceana*.

¹ Hume D. *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*. P. 556.

ized, offered a way to overcome the death of political systems. A similar vision of a decay-free political system was presented by Francis Hutcheson. Although he did not introduce any model of a utopian political system, he envisioned something similar. Hutcheson wrote that there were the seeds of death and destruction in every political state but if some political system could promote “good for all”, there was no decay in it.¹

Conclusion

Characteristic of eighteenth-century political science was the positivist assumption of the perfection of political science in the near future. There were two different approaches in eighteenth-century political science, following the Platonic dichotomy: political reasoning aimed at describing either the best possible universal political system, which can be seen as the aim of classical utopian reasoning, or the most appropriate system for each political society. A similar distinction existed in the texts of Reid and Hume — although Hume wrote about the best possible form of commonwealth rather than a utopia in his essays. In the 18th century a utopia was seen either as a purely theoretical imaginary model of a political state or a political ideal that did not *yet* exist but which could exist some time in the future.

Although the word “utopia” literarily referred to a place that did not exist, utopian models were connected to contemporary political problems. The most famous political utopias were published in the 18th century, and although the utopias of Thomas Reid and James Harrington were much appreciated as political speculation, during an age of economic expansion their rejection of private property

¹ Hutcheson F. *A System of Political Philosophy I–II* (1755, Glasgow/London), vol. II. P. 372, 377. A Divine Power, whose guidance was fundamental in the human search for a political system that was good for all, was a part of Hutcheson’s moral philosophy and politics (ibid. II, 380).

was seen as problematic. By contrast, several Scottish intellectuals claimed that owing to human desires and passion for wealth, it was impossible to establish a perfect political system.



**VON DER KLARHEIT ZUR MÜNDIGKEIT.
ZU DEN IMPLIKATIONEN
EINES METAPHERNWECHSELS
IN DER AUFKLÄRUNG**

Hartwig Frank

This paper analyzes the change of metaphors in the self-reflection of the Enlightenment thought during the 18th century from “Klarheit” (clarity) to “Mündigkeit” (coming of age, majority). It argues that in the philosophy of Kant this change of metaphors is connected with the transformation of the Enlightenment from a utopian project to a realistic one.

Der Ausdruck „Aufklärung“ als Bezeichnung einer Bewegung und einer Epoche in der europäischen Kultur, die vor allem mit dem 18. Jahrhundert verbunden werden, hat bekanntlich seinen Ursprung in der Metaphorik des Lichts. Im englischen *enlightenment* und im russischen *просвещеніе* wird auf Licht und Helligkeit ausdrücklich Bezug genommen und ebenso ist es in der französischen Bezeichnung für die Aufklärungszeit als *le siècle des Lumières* der Fall. Im deutschen Wort *Aufklärung* erscheint die Bezugnahme auf Licht und Helligkeit dagegen zunächst nur indi-

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 48–62.

rekt über das Aufklären, ursprünglich Aufklaren, als einer meteorologischen Erscheinung: das Aufbrechen des bewölkten Himmels und das Durchbrechen des Sonnenlichts. Der eigentliche Bezug liegt hier auf der Klarheit. Von der Klarheit geht im Deutschen dann auch die Aufklärungsmetaphorik aus. So weist Kaspar Stieler's *Teutscher Sprachschatz* von 1691 unter „Klarheit“ auf die „Klarheit der Sonnen“ (*splendor solis*) und auf die Verstandesklarheit (*lumen, acumen ingenii*) hin¹ und verbindet damit zwei schon etablierte Gebrauchsweisen des Wortes miteinander in der Lichtmetaphorik.² Mit „Klarheit“ und „klar“ öffnet sich so ein für die Aufklärungsthematik weitreichendes Metaphernfeld, das vom Klären über das Analysieren (Zerlegen) bis zum Auflösen, vom Klarmachen über das Erklären bis zum Entzaubern reicht. Damit schließt das Metaphernfeld um das Wort „Klarheit“ an eine Hauptforderung der rationalistischen Philosophie der Neuzeit an, an die Forderung nach klaren und deutlichen Begriffen (*notio clara et distincta*).³ Diese Forderung bleibt ein leitendes Motiv der europä-

¹ Vgl. Peter Pütz, *Die deutsche Aufklärung*, Darmstadt 1991, S. 11.

² Pütz bemerkt dazu: „In Analogie zu dieser doppelten Bedeutung dürfte auch das Wort ‚Aufklärung‘ später von der wetterkundlichen auf eine allgemein geistige Ebene übertragen worden sein.“ (Ebd.).

³ Die Linie der Aufklärung, die mit der Forderung der rationalistischen Philosophie nach *clarté* vorbereitet wird, geht auf René Descartes zurück. „Am Ursprung des Sinnes von Aufklärung steht Descartes' Thema der *clarté*.“ Dabei geht es nicht nur um eine kognitive Forderung, sondern „um klare Begriffe um der eigenen Urteilsfähigkeit willen, und die Urteilsfähigkeit bestimmt die Führung der Leidenschaften.“ Schon für Descartes ist dabei der moralische Aspekt grundlegend. Letztlich geht es ihm um die Selbstachtung, die in „Unabhängigkeit von Leidenschaften und Freiheit von Fremdbestimmung“ besteht und durch Wissen erreicht werden kann. (Vgl. Gerd Irrlitz, *Kant. Handbuch. Leben und Werk*, Stuttgart / Weimar 2010, S. 15) Einen kurzen und prägnanten Überblick über die Einteilung der Begriffe in der rationalistischen Version gibt Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Betrachtung über die Erkenntnis, die Wahrheit und die Ideen* (1684), in: Ders. *Kleine Schriften zur Metaphysik. Philosophische Schriften* Bd. 1, hg. von Hans Heinz Holz, Frankfurt am Main 1996, S. 25 ff. Vgl. zur empi-

ischen Aufklärung in ihrem Kampf gegen Aberglaube und Vorurteile und für rational begründetes, wissenschaftliches Denken. Sie liegt dem zugrunde, was als der „rationalistische Aufklärungsbegriff“ bezeichnet werden kann.¹

Insofern mit der „Klarheit“ aber auch der Übergang zur Lichtmetaphorik möglich wird, wie Stielers Hinweis auf den lateinischen Ursprung des Ausdrucks „Verstandesklarheit“ als *lumen ingenii* ausdrücklich anzeigt, öffnet sich mit dem rationalistischen Aufklärungsbegriff ein weiteres Metaphernfeld: das Aufhellen als Leuchten, Beleuchten, Erleuchten und schließlich als das Denken.²

Während das erste Metaphernfeld das Aufklären in eher sachlicher Hinsicht beschreibt: geklärt werden Begriffe, Urteile, Vorurteile, Mythen, Strukturen, Konventionen, Weltbilder, ist das zweite auf das Aufklären in subjektiver Hinsicht gerichtet: erleuchtet wird der Mensch, vor allem sein Intellekt oder Geist.

Insgesamt schließt die Metaphorik von Klären und Erleuchten durch das Licht im rationalistischen Aufklärungsbegriff an die ältere Metapher vom natürlichen Licht der Vernunft (*lumen naturale*, *lumen rationis*) an.³

ristischen Version John Locke, *Über den menschlichen Verstand* (1689), Bd. 1, Berlin 1968, S. 455 ff.

¹ Nach dem rationalistischen Aufklärungsbegriff, so Werner Schneiders, besteht Aufklärung in dem Streben nach „Wahrheit durch Klarheit“, nämlich Klarheit des Geistes, genauer Klarheit des Verstandes, daher: „Aufklärung des Verstandes“ („Ausbesserung des Verstandes“, „Erhellung des Verstandes“). (Werner Schneiders, *Einleitung*, in: Ders. (Hg.), *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, München 1995, S. 10 f.).

² Bis „fast in die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts bleibt das Wort ‚aufgeklärt‘ auf den Sinnbezirk von Intellekt und Psyche bezogen.“ (Pütz, *Die deutsche Aufklärung*, S. 11).

³ Für die Inanspruchnahme des natürlichen Lichts als entscheidender Berufungsinstanz im 17. Jahrhundert lassen sich, so Martin Schneider, mindestens vier Motivationen bzw. Aspekte nennen: die Berufung auf den gesunden Menschenverstand, die Kritik an Vorurteilen und traditioneller (aristotelisch-scholastischer) Wissenschaft, die Rationalisierung der Religion, die Letztbegründung

Kant eröffnet der Aufklärungsthematik mit dem Stichwort „Mündigkeit“ ein neues Metaphernfeld. Die Ausdrücke „mündig sein“ und „Mündigkeit“ kommen aus dem juristischen Sprachgebrauch. Danach ist mit Mündigkeit derjenige Zustand gemeint, der ein Individuum in die Lage versetzt, sich in wirtschaftlicher Hinsicht selbst zu erhalten.

Kant nimmt diese Gebrauchsweise auf, erweitert sie aber in zwei Richtungen: erstens vom Individuum auf die Menschen überhaupt, nämlich das Menschengeschlecht, und zweitens von der bloß wirtschaftlichen Selbsterhaltung auf die Selbständigkeit im Denken (Selbstdenken) und im Leben (den Mut, für das eigene Leben Verantwortung zu übernehmen).¹ Durch diese Erweiterung wird die Mündigkeit nach Kant zu einem zentralen Stichwort, mit dem der Prozess der Aufklärung beschrieben werden kann.² Und

des Wissens durch das natürliche Licht (vgl. Martin Schneider, *Das Weltbild des 17. Jahrhundert*, Darmstadt 2004, S. 16-50).

¹ Mündigkeit wird damit von Kant allgemein als Ausgang aus Unmündigkeit durch Befreiung von Vormundschaft verstanden. Die erste der genannten Erweiterungsrichtungen wird z.B. deutlich in Kants Mutmaßungen über die Menschheitsgeschichte, „daß der Ausgang des Menschen aus dem, ihm durch die Vernunft, als erster Aufenthalt seiner Gattung vorgestellten, Paradiese nicht anders, als der Übergang aus der Rohigkeit eines bloß tierischen Geschöpfes in die Menschheit, aus dem Gängelwagen des Instinkts zur Leitung der Vernunft, mit einem Worte: aus der Vormundschaft der Natur in den Stand der Freiheit gewesen sei.“ (Immanuel Kant, *Mutmasslicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte*, A 12 f.) Exemplarisch für beide genannten Richtungen ist aber vor allem Kants Aufsatz *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*

² Das Stichwort „Mündigkeit“ steht damit für das, was Werner Schneiders in Unterscheidung zum „rationalistischen Aufklärungsbegriff“ den „emanzipatorischen Aufklärungsbegriff“ nennt. Nach dem „emanzipatorischen Aufklärungsbegriff“ zielt Aufklärung auf freies Denken oder „(mit dem zeitgenössischen Ausdruck)“ auf „Selbstdenken“ und besteht zugleich in der Aufforderung an den Willen („Habe Mut“) zur „Autonomie des Denkens“ und „Selbstbestimmung im Handeln“ (Werner Schneiders, *Einleitung*, in: *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, S. 10 f.). Die Worte „Mündigkeit“ im durch Kant erweiterten Sinn und „Emanzipation“ werden seit der Spätaufklärung in ihrer Bedeutung nahezu deckungs-

das damit verbundene Metaphernfeld (Sprechen, Stimme Erheben und Abgeben, Bestimmen und Mitbestimmen, Gesetzgeben, Autonomie) wird konstitutiv für die kritische Philosophie Kants.¹

Ich möchte im Folgenden drei Thesen zu den Implikationen des Metaphernwechsels von der Klarheit zur Mündigkeit kurz erläutern:

(1) Mit diesem Metaphernwechsel ändert sich der Schwerpunkt im Selbstverständnis der Aufklärung vom rationalistischen Aufklärungsbegriff, nach dem Aufklärung vorrangig ein Projekt der menschlichen Vernunft ist, hin zum emanzipatorischen Aufklärungsbegriff, wonach im Zentrum der Aufklärung der Prozess des Selbständigwerdens des Menschen steht. Signifikant für diese Schwerpunktverlagerung ist Kants Bestimmung des Selbstdenkens in Verbindung mit der Mündigkeit.

Vor Kant bedeutet Selbstdenken die Bereitschaft und die Fähigkeit, verschiedene Meinungen zu prüfen und sich seine eigene Meinung nach keinem anderen Kriterium als der eigenen Vernunft

gleich und doch noch lange Zeit unabhängig voneinander gebraucht. So wurde die „Rolle des Begriffs *Mündigkeit* [...] seit 1830 fast schlagartig vom Begriff der *Emanzipation* übernommen, der zum ‚wichtigsten aller Begriffe‘ wurde. Daß die beiden Begriffe bis etwa 1965 nirgendwo in eine wechselseitige Beziehung treten konnten, liegt an ihrer unterschiedlichen Herkunft: *Mündigkeit* stammt aus dem deutschen Recht, *emancipatio* dagegen aus dem römischen Recht. Die Emanzipation war der Akt der Entlassung des Sohnes aus der väterlichen Gewalt in die zivilrechtliche Selbständigkeit. Erst unter dem Eindruck der Französischen Revolution änderte sich dieser Begriffsgebrauch dauerhaft dahingehend, daß (1) Emanzipation nicht passiv, sondern eigene Tätigkeit ist und daß (2) auch Gruppen (Stände, Klassen) *sich emanzipieren* können.“ (Michael Albrecht, *Mündigkeit / Emanzipation*, in: *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, S. 277 f.).

¹ Die Linie Selbstdenken bis Mündigkeit und ihre Bestimmung als Kern der Aufklärung findet sich tatsächlich erst beim späten Kant. Dagegen dominiert in Kants vorkritischem Programm der Aufklärung „ein Verständnis von Aufklärung im Sinne von Erhellung der Begriffe und Vorstellungen, wie es Christian Wolff formuliert hatte.“ (Lothar Kreimendahl, *Kants vorkritisches Programm der Aufklärung*, in: Heiner F. Klemme (Hg.), *Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*, Berlin / New York 2009, S. 124).

zu bilden. Der Selbstdenker wird in der Frühaufklärung in diesem Sinne als der Auswählende oder Eklektiker bezeichnet und dem Sektierer, als dem Anhänger einer Schulmeinung, entgegengesetzt.¹

Bei Kant wird das Selbstdenken zu einer Maxime, der im theoretischen Vernunftgebrauch eine analoge Bedeutung zukommt wie dem kategorischen Imperativ (der Selbstgesetzgebung) im praktischen Vernunftgebrauch. So wie ich mit dem kategorischen Imperativ meine Handlungsmaximen auf ihre moralische Qualität hin prüfen soll, indem ich mich frage, ob ich wollen könne, dass sie Prinzip einer allgemeinen Gesetzgebung sein könnten, so soll man durch Selbstdenken die Gründe und Regeln seiner Annahmen auf ihre epistemische Qualität hin prüfen, indem man sich frage, „ob man es wohl tunlich finde, den Grund, warum man etwas annimmt, oder die Regel, die aus dem, was man annimmt, folgt, zum allgemeinen Grundsatz seines Vernunftgebrauchs zu machen“.² Man kann Günter Zöller zustimmen, wenn er feststellt: „Mit der Verpflichtung der Aufklärung auf die mögliche Universalität von epistemischen Gründen und Regeln rückt Kants fortentwickelter Aufklärungsbegriff in unmittelbare Nähe zu seiner Konzeption von der Selbstgesetzlichkeit der Vernunft.“³

Mit dieser Nähe zur Selbstgesetzgebung der Vernunft erhält das Selbstdenken im emanzipatorischen Aufklärungsbegriff eine über die bloß kognitive Komponente hinausgehende normativ-praktische Bedeutung.⁴ Denn Selbstdenken wird von Kant nun so mit der Mündigkeit verbunden, dass dabei nicht nur der Intellekt, son-

¹ Vgl. Michael Albrecht, *Eklektik*, in: *Lexikon der Aufklärung*, S. 92 f.

² Immanuel Kant, Was heisst: Sich im Denken orientieren?, A 330 Fußnote.

³ Günter Zöller, *Aufklärung über Aufklärung. Kants Konzeption des selbständigen, öffentlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Gebrauchs der Vernunft*, in: Klemme (Hg.), *Kant und die Zukunft der europäischen Aufklärung*, S. 90.

⁴ Zum Verhältnis von kognitivem und normativ-praktischem Aspekt im Aufklärungsbegriff vgl. Rainer Enskat, *Bedingungen der Aufklärung. Philosophische Untersuchungen zu einer Aufgabe der Urteilskraft*, Weilerswist 2008, S. 38-45.

dern der ganze Mensch in Betracht kommt. Für Kant ist Aufklärung dann „nicht nur eine Sache des ‚Selbstdenkens‘, sondern ebenso sehr des ‚Selbsttuns‘“.¹ Selbstdenken wird zu einer Bedingung, um das Leben selbständig leben zu können.²

Rainer Enskat leitet aus der Verbindung von kognitiver und normativ-praktischer Komponente im Aufklärungsbegriff ab, dass „das Zentrum der Aufklärungsfunktion“ die Diagnose sei. In Analogie zur Aufklärung des Patienten durch den Arzt liege auch der Aufklärung der Menschen durch die Philosophie eine Diagnose darüber zugrunde, „was aus praktischen Gründen wert ist, gewußt zu werden“.³ Und so wie die diagnostische Funktion in der Aufklärung durch den Arzt mit einer kommunikativen Beziehung verbunden ist, die nicht nur das Expertenwissen auf Seiten des Arztes voraussetzt, sondern auch die Mündigkeit auf Seiten des Patienten, mit der Diagnose des Arztes selbstverantwortlich umgehen zu können, ebenso fordert die Aufklärung eine Öffentlichkeit mündiger Bürger, die die Diagnose darüber, was zu der je eigenen Zeit Aufklärung bedeutet, kritisch beurteilen kann.⁴ Auch der Philo-

¹ Norbert Hinske, *Eklektik, Selbstdenken, Mündigkeit – drei verschiedene Formulierungen einer und derselben Programmidee*, in: Ders. (Hg.), *Eklektik, Selbstdenken, Mündigkeit (Aufklärung Bd. 1 H. 1)*, Hamburg 1986, S. 6.

² Bezeichnend für den Zusammenhang von selbständig Denken und selbständig Leben beim späten Kant könnte folgende Beobachtung sein, die Ludwig Ernst Borowski über dessen Lehrtätigkeit machte: „Selbst denken – selbst forschen – auf seinen eigenen Füßen stehen, – waren Ausdrücke, die unablässig wieder vorkamen“. (Ludwig Ernst Borowski, *Darstellung des Lebens und Charakters Immanuel Kants. Von Kant selbst revidiert und berichtet*, Königsberg 1804, zit. nach: Alois Winter, *Selbstdenken – Antinomien – Schranken. Zum Einfluß des späten Locke auf die Philosophie Kants*, in: Hinske (Hg.), *Eklektik, Selbstdenken, Mündigkeit*, S. 30).

³ Enskat, *Bedingungen der Aufklärung*, S. 43-45.

⁴ Da Aufklärung wohl nie ein für alle Male geleistet sein wird, sondern immer wieder neue Formen der Unmündigkeit sich herausbilden können, stellen sich auch immer wieder neue Anforderungen an die diagnostische Funktion von Aufklärung. Im Hinblick auf solche Diagnosen fordert Herbert Schnädelbach ein „strukturelles Aufklärungsverständnis“: „Das Aufklärungszeitalter hat nicht

soph wird in diesem Sinne erst mündig, wenn er sein Philosophieren unter dieser zeitdiagnostischen Bestimmung zu sehen vermag. Nach Michel Foucault war es Kant, der erstmals in diesem zeitdiagnostischen Sinne auf die Aktualität seines eigenen Philosophieren reflektierte, und zwar in dem Text, in dem er Aufklärung nicht mehr unter dem Aspekt der Klarheit, sondern unter dem der Mündigkeit bestimmt, nämlich in dem Aufsatz *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*¹

Damit komme ich zu einer zweiten Implikation, die sich mit dem Metaphernwechsel von der Klarheit zur Mündigkeit wieder zunächst bei Kant zeigt.

(2) Mit diesem Metaphernwechsel vollzieht auch sich eine Veränderung des Zeithorizonts, in dem das Projekt Aufklärung ge-

alle Unmündigkeiten beseitigt; auch ‚nach der Aufklärung‘ bestehen Unmündigkeiten fort, und in dem globalen Aufklärungsprojekt sind immer wieder neue Unmündigkeiten entstanden, womit auch in Zukunft zu rechnen ist; also brauchen wir ein *strukturelles* Aufklärungsverständnis, das es uns erlaubt, Aufklärungsbedarf in den verschiedensten kulturellen Kontexten zu identifizieren und ihre Deckungschancen genauer einzuschätzen.“ (Herbert Schnädelbach, *Das Projekt ‚Aufklärung‘ – Aspekte und Probleme. Zusammenfassende Thesen*, in: Renate Reschke (Hg.), *Nietzsche. Radikalaufklärer oder radikaler Gegenauflärer?*, Berlin 2004, S. 48).

¹ So meint Foucault: „Ich möchte die These vorschlagen, daß dieser kleine Text gleichsam am Schnittpunkt von kritischer Reflexion und der Reflexion der Geschichte lokalisiert ist. Es ist eine Reflexion Kants über die Aktualität seines eigenen Unternehmens. Ohne Zweifel ist es nicht das erste Mal, daß ein Philosoph die Gründe dafür angibt, warum er zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt mit seiner Arbeit beginnt. Aber es scheint mir das erste Mal zu sein, daß ein Philosoph so eng und von innen die Bedeutung seines Werkes hinsichtlich der Erkenntnis mit einer Reflexion der Geschichte und einer besonderen Analyse des einzigartigen Moments verbindet, in dem er und wegen dem er schreibt: Die Reflexion auf das ‚Heute‘ als Differenz in der Geschichte und als Motiv für eine bestimmte philosophische Aufgabe scheint mir das Neuartige dieses Textes zu sein.“ (Michel Foucault, *Was ist Aufklärung*, in: Eva Erdmann / Rainer Forst / Axel Honneth (Hg.), *Ethos der Moderne. Foucaults Kritik der Aufklärung*, Frankfurt a.M. / New York 1990, S. 41).

dacht wird: die Zeitdiagnose ändert sich von einem aufgeklärten Zeitalter zu einem Zeitalter der Aufklärung.

Solange es der Aufklärung um die Klarheit der Gedanken und die Erhellung des menschlichen Geistes, also um die kognitive Seite von Aufklärung, ging, solange schien der Optimismus der Aufklärer durchaus nachvollziehbar, dass Aufklärung als ein so verstandener Prozess, einmal in Gang gekommen, zu einem dauerhaften Zustand werden würde. Von daher konnte man auch die Zeitdiagnose stellen, in einem aufgeklärten Zeitalter zu leben.

Auch der junge Kant teilt diesen Optimismus und spricht 1757 davon, in „aufgeklärten Zeiten“ zu leben, wobei „er ein aufgeklärtes oder ‚erleuchtetes Zeitalter‘ in Übereinstimmung mit seinem Aufklärungsverständnis konsequenterweise als ein solches, das über deutliche Begriffe verfügt“ bestimmte.¹ Mit der neuen Akzentsetzung auf Mündigkeit in seinem Aufklärungsverständnis, die mit dem Aufsatz *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?* vollzogen wird, ändert sich bekanntlich Kants Zeitdiagnose. 1784 beantwortet er die Frage: „Leben wir jetzt in einem *aufgeklärten* Zeitalter?“ mit nein, um dann hinzuzufügen: „aber wohl in einem Zeitalter der *Aufklärung*.“ Und er begründet diese Diagnose mit dem Hinweis auf „deutliche Anzeigen“ darauf, dass „die Hindernisse der allgemeinen Aufklärung, oder des Ausganges [der Menschen] aus ihrer selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit, allmählich weniger werden“.² Solche Anzeigen sind, wie Kant im Folgenden dann der Sache nach erläutert, die konsequente Trennung der Einflussbereiche von Regierung bzw. Staat einerseits und Religionsgemeinschaften andererseits, die öffentliche Diskussion von Vorschlägen zur Gesetzgebung und schließlich, und hinsichtlich der Nachhaltigkeit der Aufklärung für Kant wohl am wichtigsten, die durch die staatlich garantierte Meinungsfreiheit im öffentlichen Raum ermöglichte allmähliche Veränderung der „Sinnesart des

¹ Kreimendahl, *Kants vorkritisches Programm der Aufklärung*, S. 132.

² Immanuel Kant, *Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?*, A 491.

Volks“, wodurch das Volk immer mehr zum politischen Handeln befähigt, insofern also mündig wird, und die Regierung immer stärker dem verpflichtet wird, was ein mündig gewordenes Volk über sich selbst beschließen wird. Wenn Kant diese Anzeigen mit dem preußischen König Friedrich II. verbindet, so nicht, weil er Aufklärung überhaupt an das Wirken eines aufgeklärten absoluten Herrschers bindet, das wäre nach seiner Neubestimmung von Aufklärung als Ausgang der Menschen aus ihrer selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit nicht mehr plausibel nachvollziehbar, sondern vielmehr nur als „ein glänzendes Beispiel“ dafür, dass die Aufklärung unter den vorhandenen Bedingungen realisierbar sei. Dieses Beispiel zeige, so Kant, „daß bei Freiheit für die öffentliche Ruhe und Einigkeit des gemeinen Wesens nicht das mindeste zu besorgen sei. Die Menschen arbeiten sich von selbst nach und nach aus der Rohigkeit heraus, wenn man nur nicht absichtlich künstelt, um sie darin zu erhalten.“¹ Mit dieser Diagnose unterscheidet sich Kants Verständnis von Aufklärung, trotz der emphatischen Bemerkungen zu Friedrich II., von den utopischen Hoffnungen der Aufklärer der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts auf einen aufgeklärten Absolutismus.

Und damit komme ich zur dritten Implikation des Metaphernwechsels von der Klarheit zur Mündigkeit, die nun direkt auf das Thema dieses Symposions, das utopische Moment der Aufklärung weist.

(3) Dieser Metaphernwechsel zeigt auch an, dass eine ursprünglich praktisch-politisch utopische Ausrichtung der Aufklärung einer eher nüchternen und realistischen Erwartung Platz macht: der aufgeklärte absolute Herrscher, auf den das rationalistische Aufklärungsverständnis seine Hoffnung für die Verwirklichung der Aufklärung setzte, übernimmt im emanzipatorischen Aufklärungsverständnis bei Kant nur noch die Funktion eines Katalysators in der Initialphase der Aufklärung.

¹ Ebd., A 492.

In der europäischen Frühaufklärung hatte man die Realisierung der aufklärerischen Ideen mit dem Einfluss des absoluten Herrschers verbunden. Die Aufklärer sahen sich als Berater des Fürsten und setzten darauf, ganz im Sinne des rationalistischen Aufklärungsprogramms, nämlich durch Klärung und Erklärung der Begriffe den menschlichen Geist zu erhellen, auch den Fürsten aufzuklären, um seine absolute Herrschaft für die Ziele der Aufklärung zu nutzen. „Mit diesem Versuch“ – so Andreas Heyer in seinem Resümee der Forschungsliteratur – „war die Frühaufklärung gescheitert. Der absolute Herrscher herrscht eben absolut. [...] die Idee des Fürstenberaters [war] spätestens mit Diderots Rückkehr aus Russland 1774 endgültig obsolet. Diderot, der am Hofe der russischen Zarin Katharina II. weilte, sah dort in aller Deutlichkeit die Diskrepanz zwischen Anspruch und Wirklichkeit der absolutistischen Systeme und ihrer Repräsentanten. Zur selben Zeit erkannten auch die ‚aufgeklärten Minister‘ der 70er Jahre in Frankreich die Schranken ihrer Wirksamkeit und traten zurück bzw. scheiterten an unüberbrückbaren Widerständen des Hofes. Auch in Preußen bzw. Berlin war die Tafelrunde Friedrich II. primär ein kultureller Zirkel, der so gut wie keinen Einfluss auf die Regierungsgeschäfte im Speziellen oder die Politik im Allgemeinen besaß. Wenn die Vertreter der Aufklärung wirken wollen, so die Feststellung Diderots, dann gehe dies nur über die Mobilisierung der Öffentlichkeit und der öffentlichen Meinung, d.h. als Fürsprecher des ‚dritten Standes‘ und damit verbunden durch die Aufklärung des Volkes. Genau dies war ja der Anspruch der *Encyclopédie*.“¹

Kant zeigt nun, dass dieser Perspektivenwechsel der Aufklärung vom utopischen Konzept der Fürstenberatung zum realistischen Konzept der Mobilisierung der Öffentlichkeit und der öffentlichen Meinung nicht mit dem rationalistischen Ansatz der Aufklärung als Bemühen um Klarheit allein zu rechtfertigen sei,

¹ Andreas Heyer, *Die französische Aufklärung um 1750*, Bd. I, Berlin 2005, S. 178 f.

sondern ein verändertes Verständnis der Aufklärung selbst erforderte: bei der Aufklärung gehe es nicht nur um den klarblickenden und klardenkenden Menschen,¹ sondern auch und vor allem um den mündigen Bürger. Zwar hält auch Kant später noch an der Metaphorik der Klarheit fest, verbindet sie aber nun mit der Aufklärung des Menschen als Privatperson (bzw. Geschäftsmann) z.B. in Fragen der Moral. Für die Aufklärung des Menschen als Bürger (Staatsmann, Untertan) und damit als Person in der Öffentlichkeit wechselt er dagegen zur Metaphorik der Mündigkeit.² Die Verbindung der Öffentlichkeit mit der Mündigkeit wird zu einem zentralen Topos in Kants Aufklärungsaufsatz. In diesem Aufsatz wird, so soll abschließend angedeutet werden, Aufklärung als ein unter den gesellschaftlichen und politischen Bedingungen Europas im 18. Jahrhundert realisierbares Projekt bestimmt, das ohne die utopischen Hoffnungen der Frühaufklärung aber auch ohne radikalen, revolutionären Bruch mit der bestehenden Ordnung gedacht werden kann. Damit komme ich auf die schon erwähnte Behauptung zurück, dass dem aufgeklärten absoluten Herrscher für Kant nur noch die Funktion eines Katalysators in der Initialphase der Aufklärung zukommt.

In dem Aufklärungsaufsatz erklärt Kant, dass, damit Aufklärung wirklich werde, Freiheit erforderlich sei, und zwar Freiheit als notwendige Bedingung („Zu dieser Aufklärung wird nichts erfordert als Freiheit“) und zugleich hinreichende Bedingung („Daß aber ein Publikum sich selbst aufkläre, ist eher möglich; ja es ist, wenn man ihm nur die Freiheit läßt, beinahe unausbleiblich“). Wenn Freiheit sowohl notwendige wie hinreichende Bedingung für Aufklärung ist, so gilt aber auch umgekehrt, dass Aufklärung

¹ Siehe *Eclairé et clairvoyant* („Aufgeklärt und klarblickend“), so der Titel eines Artikels von Denis Diderot in der *Encyclopédie*.

² Vgl. Immanuel Kant, *Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis*, A 208 ff., bes. A 222 f. zur Klarheit und A 232 ff. zur Mündigkeit (bzw. Unmündigkeit) und Selbständigkeit.

sowohl notwendige wie hinreichende Bedingung für Freiheit ist. Tatsächlich ist ja auch plausibel, dass nur durch die Freiheit, „von seiner Vernunft in allen Stücken *öffentlichen Gebrauch* zu machen“, Aufklärung stattfinden kann, dass zugleich aber auch nur ein aufgeklärter, also mündiger Mensch in der Lage ist, wirklich diese Freiheit zu nutzen, also „von seiner Vernunft in allen Stücken *öffentlichen Gebrauch* zu machen“. Freiheit und Aufklärung bedingen sich also wechselseitig.

Die Frage ist dann, wie dieses Wechselverhältnis überhaupt in Gang kommen kann. Und dazu ist, modern gesprochen, das systemische Funktionieren einer solchen Wechselwirkung von einer Initialphase zu unterscheiden. Ich möchte behaupten, dass es Kant in seinem Aufsatz zunächst um eben diese Initialphase geht. In der Initialphase müssen außersystemische Faktoren ins Spiel kommen, die förderlich für die Herausbildung des Systemverhaltens sind. Genau solche Faktoren sucht Kant, um rechtfertigen zu können, dass Aufklärung unter den Bedingungen seiner Zeit kein utopisches Projekt bleiben müsse, sondern tatsächlich realistische Chancen habe. Allerdings könne bei dieser Rechtfertigung zunächst einiges paradox erscheinen. Das Paradoxe besteht hier darin, dass zur Herausbildung einer solchen Ordnung, in der Aufklärung und Freiheit sich wechselseitig bedingen und damit erhalten können, zunächst Faktoren erforderlich sind, die dann durch die neue Ordnung obsolet werden. Ein solcher Faktor ist nun für Kant der aufgeklärte Monarch. Seine Funktion in der Initialphase der Aufklärung besteht darin, den öffentlichen Raum der Meinungsfreiheit aufgrund seiner absoluten Herrschaftsbefugnis besser gegen Okkupationsbestrebungen partikularer Interessen in der Gesellschaft sichern zu können als dies ein republikanisch verfasstes Staatswesen kann – solange die Mehrheit des Volkes noch nicht hinreichend aufgeklärt ist, um von seiner Freiheit vernünftigen

Gebrauch zu machen.¹ Ist die Aufklärung aber so weit fortgeschritten, dass die Mehrheit des Volkes dazu in der Lage ist, so kann das Volk sich nicht nur eine entsprechende republikanische Verfassung geben, sondern deren Wirksamkeit auch selbst garantieren. Dann wäre die Initialphase abgeschlossen und der Monarch nicht mehr als absoluter Herrscher, sondern nur noch als höchster Repräsentant des Staats zu rechtfertigen.

Mit dieser Interpretation von Kants Aufklärungsaufsatz dürfte sich auch eine scheinbare Ungereimtheit ausräumen lassen, auf die Peter Weber im Nachwort zur Reclamausgabe der *Berlinische Monatsschrift* hingewiesen hat. In dieser Zeitschrift veröffentlichte Kant im Abstand nur eines Monats (November und Dezember 1784) zwei Aufsätze, die scheinbar sich widersprechende Auffassungen zum Verhältnis von Aufklärung, Freiheit und Staat enthalten. Ich zitiere Weber: „In der ‚Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht‘ war gesagt worden, die ‚bürgerliche Freiheit‘ könne ‚jetzt auch nicht sehr wohl angetastet werden, ohne den Nachteil davon in allen Gewerben, vornehmlich dem Handel, dadurch aber auch die Abnahme der Kräfte des Staats im äußern Verhältnis zu spüren. Diese Freiheit geht aber allmählich weiter.‘ Sie führe zur Entfaltung der Aufklärung und deren schließlichem Einfluß auf die Regierungsgrundsätze. In der nun aber nicht geschichtsphilosophischen, sondern aktuell-programmatischen ‚Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?‘ erscheint dieser Begründungszusammenhang geradezu auf den Kopf gestellt: Es wird zu erweisen gesucht, daß eben der erkanntermaßen geringe Grad ‚bürgerlicher Freiheit‘ in Preußen die Möglichkeit des freien öffentlichen Vernunftgebrauchs biete. Damit blieb keine sichere Grundlage dieser Freiheit; vielmehr war allein der ‚gute

¹ Dass dazu nach Kant zunächst äußere Faktoren erforderlich sind, belegt auch die Anmerkung B 291 f. in *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*. Dort heißt es: Man könne zur Freiheit „nicht *reifen*, wenn man nicht zuvor in Freiheit gesetzt worden ist“.

Wille' des Fürsten entscheidend. Um den fürstlichen Willen gerade angesichts der zwielichtigen Haltung des preußischen Thronfolgers noch als Garantie politisch-literarischer Öffentlichkeit erscheinen zu lassen, kam Kant nicht umhin, Friedrich II. zur Gallionsfigur der Aufklärung zu stilisieren.¹ Wie Weber selbst betont, handelt es sich um unterschiedliche Aspekte, unter denen Kant das Verhältnis von Aufklärung, Freiheit und Staat behandelt, und damit dürfte sich die scheinbare Ungereimtheit nun so aufklären lassen: Im ersteren Aufsatz wird das systemische Verhältnis in geschichtsphilosophischer Perspektive thematisiert, im Aufklärungsaufsatz dagegen die Initialphase in aktuell-programmatischer Hinsicht.



¹ Peter Weber, *Die „Berlinische Monatsschrift“ als Organ der Aufklärung*, in: *Berlinische Monatsschrift (1783-1796)*. Herausgegeben von Friedrich Gedike und Johann Erich Biester. Auswahl, Leipzig 1986, S. 374.

**THE BEEHIVE METAPHOR
AND THE AMBER ROOM
IN THE CATHERINE PALACE
AT TSARSKOYE SELO**

Larisa Nikiforova

My research interest lies in the area of cultural history of palaces and court residences, mainly the ways of representation of power in the architectural space, decorative programs of interiors, the usage or functioning of architecture and landscapes or their parts. Once, among other subjects, I attempted to analyze from this point of view the Amber Room in the Catherine Palace in Tsarskoye Selo — one of the most famous palace interiors of the 18th century, seemingly devoid of any narrative programme. This material was published in the papers, and then I included it into the monograph.¹ This paper develops and continues previous conclusions or rather is an attempt to inscribe a curious baroque artifact in a broad cul-

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 63–80.

¹ Никифорова Л.В. “Стены, ‘текущи млеком и медом’. Янтарный кабинет Екатерининского дворца в Царском селе,” in: Никифорова Л.В. *Чертоги власти. Дворец в пространстве культуры*. СПб.: Искусство–СПб., 2011. С. 346–356.

tural context. But at first I would like to dwell on some points of the executed researches.

The glory of the Amber Room is so resplendent, and its creators are so famous, that the question about the narrative structures of this interior seemed abundant. Yet, every artwork of the 18th century was created as a reasoning on a particular topic, and the interiors of emperor palace had a very rich content. The Amber room as other palace interiors “told” something to its owners, customers, creators... But what did it speak about?

Thus, I suggested that the Amber room not only appealed to the sight, but was saturated with philosophical and moral reflections. I tried to spell out the semantics of amber, the images of amber and their contexts in poetic, journalistic, political, scientific discourses of the 18th century and to link them with the Amber room. Three relevant sets of ideas, tied with amber and familiar to the people of the 18th century, were vivid.

On the first place, amber was able to “delight the senses” (sight, taste, smell and touch) and represent them allegorically. Bacon called the senses “the virtues of the body,” and the philosophers of the Enlightenment attributed the senses to human nature. And so I suppose that amber referred to the idea of the fullness of human nature with the meaning of sensitive and perceptual experience of a person.

On the second place, amber was a well-known emblem of the Time, not made by hand emblem of the correlation of greatness and smallness, eternity and moment, past and present. Most clearly this signification opened up in the case of “ant in amber” or “fly in amber”.

And finally amber was represented as honey-colored stone, beer, Falernian wine, as Pliny wrote of it. Besides, the amber is like hardened honey, butter and vine. The amber literary, i.e. visually embodied the image of paradise and the “golden age” well-known due to liturgical texts, lyrical and panegyric poetry. And I called Amber

room — “The walls flowing with milk and honey.” It seems to me, the Amber Room may be interpreted as a hardened panegyric.

When I applied to the semantics of amber for the first time the Amber room still had not been recreated. My reasoning was speculative and based on verbal texts and on my own experience of small amber things. When I saw the renovated Amber Room with my own eyes, I was convinced in the correctness of my assumptions. Amber walls in reality look soft, sticky, and sweet. The Amber Room indeed has the walls flowing with milk and honey.

The Amber Room was created and existed as a part of the palace interior. The palaces, especially the palaces of the 18–19 centuries, were not just works of art, but a unique form of political representation, or even a form of manifestation of ideological programs. This refers to the meaning of the word “manifestation” (derived from the Latin *manus* — hand, to make by hand) containing direct identity of a statement and an action. Palaces, paintings, sculptures, dresses etc., as well as ceremonies and holidays were not purely aesthetic objects or just demonstration of personal taste or entertainment. The art works involved in court life had value for their symbolic qualities inseparable from the aesthetic ones in the epoch where the ideology existed not in form of direct political statements, but in the form of symbolic practices.

It has to be mentioned that the use of amber in political representation was not common. Not amber, but diamonds decorated the crowns of the rulers. Amber was considered a gem of cooks. It was the view of the 19th century, but in the 18th century amber epithets were relevant mainly in the so-called “low” style of literary language, in lyric poetry (Bacchus songs, fable, pastoral), which is directly related to the ability of amber to “delight the senses.” Amber walls at the Royal and then imperial palace were a Baroque curiosity, a witty invention, a unique possibility to visualize the basic metaphor of paradise plenty and paradise bliss in a statuesque monument.

This is where my previous reflections ceased. I seemed to have completed the task and indicated relevant contexts that forced the language of interior decoration “to speak.” I also suggested that semantic diversity and wealth of amber walls, and not only their beauty and attractiveness, were the reason for several powerful monarchs to create the Amber room and to cherish this beautiful but very vagarious wall covering. The Amber mosaic is susceptible to temperature and humidity changes, its wooden bases may easily scale off, the mosaic may buckle and crumble. The Amber Room is the only example of amber being used for a monumental work, which no one has ever tried to repeat as it proved to be too expensive, labor-consuming and fragile. Of course, it was common for the 18th century, especially for the rococo style, to apply unusual and innovative materials and technologies in the interior decoration. But the difficulties of creation and maintaining of amber walls surpass all known porcelain, mirror, and pearl rooms. In spite of this, at least seven monarchs during seventy years were engaged in the creation of the Amber Room: Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm I and his wife Sophia Charlotte, Friedrich II, another Prussian King, Russian emperor Peter I, Empress Anna, Empress Elizabeth and Catherine the Great. Some of them were eccentric enough to order to destroy newly built palaces or to construct new ones.¹

My previous conclusions didn’t touch upon the problem of Utopia, my goal was to show the plenty of philosophical, intellectual, literary content of this vacuous interior — without any clear decorative program.

How is all this linked to Utopia?

If we keep in mind the difference between the utopian and ideological mentality, conducted K. Mannheim, then we deal with artifact of ideology rather than of utopia. K. Mannheim wrote:

¹ About the history of Amber room see: Воронов М.Г., Кучумов А.М. *Янтарная комната*. Л., 1989; “Янтарная комната,” in: ГМЗ “Царское село” <http://www.tzar.ru/museums/palaces/catherine/amber_room> (23.09.2012).

In limiting the meaning of the term 'Utopia' to that type of orientation which transcends reality and which at the same time breaks the bonds of the existing order, a distinction is set up between the Utopian and the ideological states of mind. One can orient himself to objects that are alien to reality and which transcend actual existence — and nevertheless still are effective in the realization and the maintenance of the existing order of things. <...> Such an incongruent orientation became Utopian only when in addition it tended to burst the bonds of the existing order. <...> Every period in history has contained ideas transcending the existing order, but these did not function as Utopias; they were rather the appropriate ideologies of this stage of existence as long as they were 'organically' and harmoniously integrated into the world-view characteristic of the period (i.e. did not offer revolutionary possibilities).¹

S. Baer, who studied the poetics of paradise myth in Russian literature of the 18th century, pointed out a strong closeness of the ideological and utopian texts, their genre models, images and motifs of the "golden age." "Paradise topics have frequently been used for panegyric and propagandistic purposes, praising a person, place, period, product or concept through a 'spatial correlative' — a paradisaal place corresponding to the goodness of the subject praised."² Continuing Mannheim's distinction between utopia and ideology S. Baer distinguished the Utopia (U-topos, description of a place that does not exist) and the EU-topos, description of a good place, a blessed place. Panegyric literature according to S. Baer can be considered eu-topia. "'Panegyric eutopia' was partly made possible by the rhetorical structure of the traditional utopia, which is actually panegyric, praising some good place (eu-topos) for its

¹ Mannheim K. *Ideology and Utopia. Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*. N.Y. Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1954. P. 173–174 <<http://archive.org/details/ideologyutopiain00mann>> (13.01.2013).

² Baehr S.L. *The Paradise Myth in Eighteenth Century Russia. Utopian patterns in early secular Russian literature and culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991. P. 11.

good government and good life, using a guide like narrator who in his enthusiasm resembles a person of the panegyric ode.”¹

S. Baer like other researchers of utopia, analyzed mainly the literature, and also some court festivals and Masonic rituals. Yet, utopia and eu-topia were not limited by verbal texts only. We can recall performative texts and monumental texts, among them — the Amber Room, a frozen, hardened image of the “golden age.”

The ability of Amber to portray the hardened honey lets us put this curious invention in the context of the Beehive metaphor. It may seem a stretch, because in Paradise topics is not necessarily produced by bees. In blessed lands, in the “golden age” the earth was flowing with milk and honey, the oaks oozed with honey. But Amber Room is not a landscape object. Honey inside a closed space is rather a hive, not the Garden of Eden. Besides the bees were conceived and visualized as blessed people as they are born miraculously, their family is immortal, they are chaste and do not give birth to children in pain (“they don’t indulge in sexual union, or lazily relax their bodies in love, or produce young in labor,” Virgil “Georgics”). Bees live, work and raise their children collectively and feed on God’s dew.² Honey (wisdom) was a worthy reward for their virtues. Bee family was like a reminder of a lost golden age for human society.

The “Beehive metaphor” is not the term in a strict sense. The scholars who study poetics of fiction, social imagination, iconography and visual culture mostly in interdisciplinary vein created it inadvertently. Christopher Holigsvort called his book “Poetics of the Hive” and analyzed the functioning of images of hive and bees in literature from Homer and Virgil to Kafka, Sartre and Kobo

¹ Baehr S.L. Ibid. P. 11.

² About “bee” virtues see, for example: “О пчелах,” in: *Басни нравоучительные с изъяснением господина барона Голберга*. Перевел Денис фон Визин. М., 1761. С. 54–57; Локций И. *Общество пчел, или Краткое сравнение правительства пчел с правлением гражданским*. СПб.: Типогр. Академии наук, 1772.

Abe.¹ Juan Antonio Ramirez called his book “Beehive Metaphor” and studied how the architects of the 20th century were inspired by the real “bees’ architecture,” by visual images of hives.² Following these authors I used the concept of “Beehive metaphor.”

This concept refers to various forms of comparison of bee society with human society in positive or negative sense. Since the classical antiquity the beehive has served as a model for an ideal society, while honey and wax provided the basis for countless positive images of plenty and productivity. Beehive and a life of bee’s family were a symbol of wisdom and knowledge, of discipline and order, of social hierarchy, a symbol of industry and co-operated work. C. Hollingsworth described the Beehive metaphor as “a building block of the imagination,”³ as “a habit of seeing and thinking,”⁴ that may be called the unit-idea in the research language of History of ideas (following Arthur Lovejoy). According to Hollingsworth such intellectual habit appeared every time when “individual and social order in relation to each other”⁵ became the subject of reflection. The Beehive metaphor provided a cultural transfer of philosophical thought, social dreams, political declarations through ages and countries.

Beehive as a matter of description, a metaphor, a figure of comparison has similarities with the Island as a Utopian locus (secularized *locus amoenus*). The hive as well as the Island is an isolated place where algorithmic social order is equipped. Contacts from this “place” to the outside world are limited, and its inhabitants tend to self-defense. Genre features of literary Utopia as well as the description of beehive include the detailed explanations of po-

¹ Hollingsworth C. *Poetics of the Hive. The Insect Metaphor in Literature*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001. 298 p.

² Ramírez J.A. *Beehive Metaphor. From Antonio Gaudi to Le Corbusier*. L.: Reaction books Ltd, 2000.

³ Hollingsworth C. Ibid. P. IX.

⁴ Ibid. P. X.

⁵ Ibid. P. IX.

litical system, family and gender relations, special language of communication as another form of closeness of the locus, education, religion.¹

Researchers of Utopia believe that the motive of Island as the Utopian locus was the reflection of the Age of Exploration. The motive of an unknown island, upon which the traveler stumbles and the way to which cannot be found again, was born from the experience of early long-distance maritime expeditions.² The same happens with the hive. Its symbolic value was nourished with the real circumstances for a long time. It is important to note, that for a long time the beekeeping was a risky and adventurous activity.

The man almost could not observe the life of bees inside the hive. It was actually a closed, hard-to-reach object, full of secrets. And beekeepers, in masks surrounded by smoke were as Mediators between the worlds.³ It is not surprising that the Beehive was used as a symbol of secret knowledge hidden from the profanes as life in the hive is invisible to people. In this quality beehive was used in symbolic language of alchemists and Freemasons.

The revolution in beekeeping practice took place in the 19th century when the movable comb hive was invented and the epoch of so called "rational beekeeping" or "rational apiculture" began. Then the man could truly get inside the hive, and even fulfill an old dream about a glass hive in order to observe the life of bees through the transparent walls. Furthermore, glass hives became a common piece of laboratory equipment.⁴

The description of hive and bees' life implies a comparison with the existing social order and a critical reflection or ironical un-

¹ Шадурский М. *Литературная утопия от Мора до Хаксли: Проблемы жанровой поэтики и семиосферы. Обретение острова*. М.: Изд-во ЛКИ, 2007. С. 27–28.

² For instance: Ferns C. *Narrating Utopia*. Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1999. P. 31–66.

³ See, for instance, the print of Piter Brueghel "Beekeepers."

⁴ Халифман И.О., Васильева Е.Н. *Пчелы. Повесть о биологии пчелиной семьи и победах науки о пчелах*. М.: Молодая гвардия, 1981. С. 33.

masking. Not only fiction literature or social philosophical treatises refer to such a comparison. The beekeeping manuals, practical or scientific works about bee-culture certainly include a component of comparison and edification.

Beehive metaphor was diverse and very adaptable to different political systems.

It is known, for instance, that the ancient Egyptians saw in a bees' nest a state headed by a bee-pharaoh surrounded by his suite of servants, fanning him with their mustaches. The bee-pharaoh observed from the height of his wax throne how the caravans of bees-slaves piled sweet gifts to his feet. Plato following the Egyptians and after him Aristotle found the slaveholding society in the bees' nest controlled by drones-aristocrats. [...] The English writers of the 16th century drew a bee colony ridiculously similar to the merchant society of Elizabethan England, but at the same time the bee-colony in the writings of French authors of the 17th century was represented basing on the classical feudal principles. Now it is difficult to read without a smile the essay of French writer Simon, who describing the 'state of bees' told how the bees-porters at the entrance to the city-nest greeted weary bee-travelers, who came from far away with the goods, how before the swarming the king bee signaled about the forthcoming campaign with a silver pipe.¹

Beatrice Wilson, the author of the book "The Hive: The Story of the Honeybee and Us" summarized the describing of Beehive political order in such a way: "The hive has been, in turn, monarchical, oligarchic, aristocratic, constitutional, imperial, republican, absolute, moderate, communist, anarchist and even fascist."² People invented political system of hive in some cases, to justify the existing order of things, in other — to correct and change it.

¹ Ibid. C. 6–7.

² Wilson B. *The Hive: The Story of the Honeybee and Us*. N.Y.: Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin's Griffin, 2006. P. 106.

It is well-known that a rich mythological tradition shaped around the hive and bees. But in the Modern times the hive was also in demand as a model of society, a sample of lifestyle and a spatial envelope organizing the behavior order. It is also important that in the Modern Period, the Beehive metaphor changed its potential — from praising and edificatory to transforming and breaking the order of things. In this context the work of Juan Antonio Ramirez is very interesting and convincing. He devoted his research to the Beehive metaphor in architecture of the 20th century. “My interest, — Ramires wrote, — has been to show that artistic (and architectural) significance can be detected at several levels: the beehive has provided a social model, sometimes explicit and sometimes implicit; it seems to me that it has served as a quarry for multiple references to shape. Architects and artists have imitated the appearance and structures of traditional beehive or honeycomb with its hexagonal sockets, and it has also played an important role as the model of a rational beehive. One can see how many metaphors build up and are modulated.”¹

The famous “catenary arch” of Antoni Gaudí — the distinctive feature of his architectural style — proved to be inspired by the shape of rural hives. For the first time he used this arch in the building of workshop for the Mataró workers’ cooperative. In his youth Antoni Gaudí maintained a close personal and professional relationship with Salvador Pagès i Anglada, a textile industrialist whose views were close to Utopian Socialism and who founded the Mataró workers’ cooperative in 1864. Gaudí worked enthusiastically in planning the cooperative’s premises and attributes of “working beehive.” He designed the emblem of the textile cooperative, that was used in the organization banners and posters. A bee at the loom was in this emblem, a bee adorned the cooperative’s banner. The structure of the catenary arch provided the basis for

¹ Ramíres J.A. Ibid. P. 14.

many Gaudí's masterpieces, including the Sagrada Família — “mystical beehive.”¹

The first design of skyscraper by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was inspired by rational beehive with transparent outward walls and was called “Crystal honeycomb.”²

Some Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural projects were based on the hexagonal structures or the image of hive. The unrealized project of the cathedral for million people was conceived as a “mystical beehive.” “Hana-Honeycomb House” located in the Stanford University's campus was designed on the basis of hexagon-shaped spaces surrounding a brick chimney. It was built for a young family of professors, intellectuals close to the positions of John Dewey with critics of the city and society. Famous Guggenheim Museum in New York was carried out as a stylized form of “rural Beehive.”³

Inexplicable shapes of the house of Soviet architect Konstantin Melnikov, Ramires compared to a beehive (rustic hives made of cork bark). The house consisted of two interpenetrating cylinders, one of which had windows just like honeycombs — the emblem of the idea that inspired the architect.⁴

It is important to note, that the reference to the beehive didn't have only aesthetic sense. It was at some point a certain social program. In some cases it was a dream of a perfect society or harmony of life and work. In some cases it was an escape from real social order. Ramires suggested that the attitude to the hive metaphor changed in the interwar period — from mostly positive to negative. “The life in a dwelling that can be described as being ‘like a beehive’ is for an ordinary man, it is the height of misfor-

¹ Ibid. P. 36–68.

² Ibid. P. 98–102.

³ Ibid. P. 101–115.

⁴ Ibid. P. 13.

tune. The beehive evokes images of overcrowded rootlessness and impersonal existence.”¹

However, the Beehive metaphor survives, but in a new way, in a new quality. For a long time bees had been appreciated as a symbol of order, discipline and strong hierarchy. But today this idea is not relevant. Contemporary researchers, who look for analogies between human society and bee family, state that beehive is a model of self-organization.

Thomas Seeley, professor, neurobiologist at Cornell University, supposes that these incredible insects have much to teach us when it comes to collective wisdom, collective intelligence and effective decision making. Every year, faced with the life-or-death problem of choosing and traveling to a new home, honeybees stake everything on a process that includes collective fact-finding, vigorous debate, and consensus building. He also provides a few points on how rules of honeybee democracy may be applied to decision-making in human groups, with minimal dependence on a leader, competition among a diversity of viewpoints, and a method for determining a majority-based resolution.²

The beehive metaphor inspires the researches of computer based problem solving. The exploration of selection processes based on limited information, the selection of best sources of information, source quality evaluation, the creation of search engine and hypertext.³

Having completed a brief history of the Beehive metaphor, I would like to note that it is a very stable and strong image, a

¹ Ibid. P. 16.

² Seeley Th.D. *Honeybee Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

³ Navrat P., Ezzeddine A.B., Jastrzemska L., Jelinek T. “Exploring the bee hive metaphor as a model for problem solving: search, optimisation, and more,” in: *Web Intelligence and Intelligent Agents*. Ed. by Zeeshan-UI-Hassan Usmani. Published: March 1, 2010 <<http://www.intechopen.com/books/web-intelligence-and-intelligent-agents/exploring-the-bee-hive-metaphor-as-a-model-for-problem-solving-search-optimisation-and-more>> (19.09.2012).

source of inspiration that nourished utopian as well as ideological projects. The Beehive metaphor had been embodied for a long time only in verbal texts and emblematics. In Modern times the monumental and even social texts were added (for instance, the researchers adduce the Mormon society, the artistic commune “Hive” in Paris). Early Modern age for the beehive metaphor was the epoch of intense rethinking and reconfiguration from “ideological” quality to “utopian.” Ideological content of the beehive metaphor was primarily associated with the images of the golden age and Paradise bliss where the honey was a miraculous gift. The utopian content was linked with images of hard work and selflessness, where the honey was a fair reward. At this crucial time the Amber Room was created, it was probably the first monumental embodiment of the beehive metaphor.

I would like to remind that the Amber Room can be considered a monumental panegyric. Literary panegyrics of the same period responded to concrete events, clearly expressed different ideological program and author’s position in their rhetorical clichés.¹ The known history of Amber room doesn’t give an opportunity to explain in detail its ideological/utopian message. We only can make some suggestions.

I would like to show how the significations of Amber room changed. It is a challenge and I’ll only try to make some guesses. The panegyric meaning must have been more important in the Elizabethan age. The Amber room was assembled in the Winter palace in 1746 and began to serve as the setting for official receptions. The Empress appeared there in all the splendor of her dignity. Then in 1755 Elizabeth ordered to move the Amber Room to the Great Palace at Tsarskoye Selo (the Catherine Palace).

¹ Погосян Е. *Восторг русской оды и решение темы поэта в русском панегирике 1730–1762 гг.* Тарту, 1997. <<http://www.ruthenia.ru/document/534639.html>> (дата обращения: 10.10.2012).

Tsarskoye Selo in the Elizabethan age and then in the epoch of Catherine II was a private residence in a certain way. Privacy then of course was not understood in its modern sense. It is hard now to imagine privacy and solitude, when the empress was surrounded by courtiers, who lived in enfilade walk-through rooms. At that time privacy was determined by the absence of ceremonial or special etiquette rules. The empress Elizabeth emphasized that Tsarskoye Selo was her inheritance from her mother (the empress Catherine II) and Peterhof belonged to her father (the emperor Peter I). In the time of the Catherine II the images and functions of suburban palaces were also different. Catherine II kept on distinguishing between residences as male and female, but also added this distinguishing within different types of behavior — private and public ones. The privacy, freedom from convention, simplicity were female features, whilst publicity, triumphalism, officiality were considered male. Of course, the luxury festivities took place sometimes in Tsarskoye Selo and some elements of private behavior can be found in Peterhof. And still the contraposition of cozy Tsarskoye Selo to the prime Peterhof was a common theme in the correspondence, memoirs, travelogues of the Catherine's age.

Catherine called Tsarskoye Selo “my village,” “my estate,” emphasizing the life “without ceremony” surrounded by a limited circle of intimate friends. “In this place decorated with her excellent taste she slumbered away from her work, and there was not any court etiquette. We, the courtiers, paced dressed in the tails and spent the life very calm and pleasant. Our treatment, we can say, was much more courageous than in the city. During her evening strolls we would rope, run after each other, play different games, which always pleased the Empress.”¹ Catherine often left for and

¹ Голицын Ф.Н. “Записки [Предисл. П.И. Бартенева],” in: *Русский архив*. 1874. Кн. 1. Вып. 5. Стб. 1318.

came from Tsarskoye Selo “incognito,”¹ but her way to Peterhof was always a ceremonial procession.

The Amber room turned into a part of private space as Tsarskoye Selo in whole, it became a personal treasure. Attendance at the Amber Room was a part of a private visit to the Empress, available only to chosen ones.

The Amber room in the Catherine palace was supplied with the allegories of the five senses painted by Yakob Groot. Thus the significance of amber as of sensitive experience was highlighted. Catherine II in the beginning of her reign undertook a big reconstruction of the Amber room, which proves its value. The painted allegories of the five senses were substituted for Florentine mosaics on the same subjects. So this set of ideas was not lost. Later in 1770, when the works in the Amber Room were completed, the chamber was crowned with the plafond “Wisdom Protecting Youth from the Temptations of Love” (or “The Triumph of Wisdom over Sensuality”).² Thereby the metaphor of wisdom was emphasized.

It is important to remember that bees and beehive played an important part in the emblematic language. The age of Catherine II was “the period of flourishing of bees emblematics in Russia. The semantics of bee was symbol of use.”³ E. Pchelov, one of the leading Russian experts in heraldry, lined the value of honey bees in political emblems of Catherine II with Napoleon and Italian family Barberini.

Catherine II ordered to make new amber panels for the Amber Room in 1763. In 1765 she wrote to Voltaire describing her personal emblem: “My motto is a bee, which flies from one plant onto another to collect honey for its hive.” Catherine bestowed her emblem to the Free Economic Community established in 1765. The tasks of its

¹ Грибовский А.М. *Записки о императрице Екатерине Великой полковника, состоявшего при ея особе статс-секретарем, Адриана Моисеевича Грибовского*. Изд. 2-е с доп. М., 1864. С. 24.

² Успенский А.И. *Императорские дворцы*. Т. 2. М., 1913. С. 249.

³ Пчелов Е.В. “Пчёлы в европейской и русской эмблематике и геральдике,” in: *Труды ‘Русской антропологической школы’*. Вып. 10. М.: РГГУ, 2012. С. 221.

members were to “care about the agriculture and housekeeping.” The word “housekeeping” did not have only pragmatic meaning, but was closer to the biblical “dispensation of grate.”¹

At last, there is a very big temptation to connect the Amber room and the idea of beehive with the representation of woman’s monarchy. By the way, Shakespeare described the head of the hive as a King bee. The discovery that the big bee, the center of the hive activity was female (Queen bee) was the result of the invention of microscope. It took place in the beginning of the 17th century. One of the first detailed writings on this subject was the book of Charles Butler “Women’s monarchy. History of Bees,” which appeared in several publications (1609).

In his book Butler, in the best tradition of the works about bees referred to scientific and philosophical arguments, compared bee family to human society, described specific language of bees, and even published a note of bees’ madrigals — he tried to write down the sounds produced by bees in musical notation.²

But this point was not totally accepted even in the 18th century. For instance, the book by Johann Loccenii, translated into Russian and published in 1772 (original title “*Republica apum*”), imparted that it was unknown who was at the head of the beehive — Queen bee or King bee. On the other hand, the idea of a single female, adored by crowds of “gallants” was ambiguous and doubtful in moral sense and provoked disagreeable association with the favoritism practice of real queens and empresses. By the way Charles Butler believed that Queen bee was a virgin. In other words, the idea of Queen bee was not relevant for the symbolism of power.

¹ Из письма Екатерины II Вольтеру (11/12 August 1765), in: *Бумаги императрицы Екатерины II, хранящиеся в государственном архиве министерства иностранных дел. Сборник русского исторического общества*. Т. 10. СПб., 1872. С. 38.

² Beekeeping collection at the National Library of Scotland <<http://digital.nls.uk/moir/piping.html>> (15.10.2012).

Indeed, to have a woman on the throne was not a common situation at that time. Thus, the representation of power for a female ruler involved special difficulties in the Elizabethan Britain as well as in Russia of the 18th century. In the epoch of court coups practically every ruler ascended to the throne in the absence of direct legitimacy, then the significations of the symbolic practices of legitimacy were very important. But symbolic justification of female reign had special difficulties. In letters of Lady Rondeau wrote during the reign of empress Anna Ivanovna (1730s) we can see the next dramatic episode. Anna Ivanovna asked the Chinese Ambassador to tell about all Russian customs that seemed the most unusual. Chinese man replied: “A woman on the throne” (Letter XVI).¹ Note that Europeans of 18th century usually put paradoxical and shrewd opinions into the mouth of the Chinese.

J. Casanova repeated something alike thirty years later without a reference to the Chinese wisdom. For him Russia itself was a country of paradoxes, this strange thing — only one of many others.

It seems that Russia is a country where the relationships between sexes are put completely inside out: the women are at the head of government here, chairing academic institutions, are in charge of the state administration and high politics. The only thing that is still wanting in Russia and the only advantage lacking for these Tatar beauties (*à ces beautés tartares*) is the spectacle of some celebrated women commanding its armies.²

But the empresses commanded the troops, especially in the days of palace coups, they conferred themselves military ranks, took

¹ Письма Леди Рондо. *Письма дамы, прожившей несколько лет в России к ее приятельнице в Англию*. The text cited from: *Безвременье и временички. Воспоминания об “Эпохе дворцовых переворотов” (1720-е — 1760-е годы)*. Л., 1991 <<http://www.vostlit.info/Texts/rus10/Rondo2/Briefe/26.phtml?id=1267>> (16.11. 2012).

² Казанова де Сеингальт Дж. “Записки веницианца Казанова. 1765–1766 [Отрывки],” in: *Русская старина*. 1874. Т. 9. № 3. С. 540.

part in military maneuvers, hunted passionately. All of this customs were not just individual features, but symbolic practices demonstrating male incarnation of the ruler. Or, in the words of R. Wortman, “reflection of classic concept of gender identity and sexual ambivalence.”¹

Despite the practices of masculine qualities representation dictated by symbolic language of the epoch, and creatively performed by Catherine II, she demonstrated a feminine style of management and policy. Catherine the Great emphasized in certain cases her womanly nature, her personal efforts for good of the empire. She was proud of the order in her “small household,” was busy with her “hive.” And she chose the image of work bee, not the Queen bee for the emblem.

In conclusion I should mention that the Amber room is the unique masterpiece of decorative art that seems to have neither roots nor replicas. But if we plunge the Amber room into the history of Beehive metaphor running through different activities, different kinds of texts, we can discover its rich context. The Beehive metaphor is the connecting link between the two types of Utopia — Utopia addressed to the past (lost golden age) and addressed to the future. The Beehive metaphor is the connecting link between the Utopia and Eutopia: Utopia as the critical reflection on contemporary society and image of positive changes; Eutopia as a kind of political representation of wisdom and the state cares of real government. The Amber room is an exceptional form of the Beehive metaphor, the first attempt of its monumental representation in the period, when different significations of beehive existed simultaneously: panegyric and liturgical, mystical and esoteric, ideological and utopian.



¹ Уортман Р. *Сценарии власти*. Т. 1. М.: ОГИ, 2004. С. 124.

ON THOMAS THORILD AND UTOPIAS

Pekka Hongisto

“In a perfect and finished world all utopias are homeless” (Ernst Bloch).

The Swedish poet, philosopher and political pamphleteer Thomas Thorild (1759–1808) called his prose fragments and pamphlets Utopias and even some of his poems under the title “Passions” (“*Passionerna*”). Generally passionate poems have been classified under the label of Romanticism, a leading trend in literature of that time. Romanticism can be an escape from harsh reality but it can degenerate into style (*stil*). Is there a difference between this and a more radical notion, an escape into the future, that can be called radical utopianism in a more positive sense? What did Thorild actually pursue with his “poetic dreaming” (*poetiska drömmandet* or as Kivi says in Finnish: *poetillinen uneksunta*) and why in Sweden?

“This Age is so full of Light, that in Europe there is hardly any country or region, whose rays don’t mix with each other or intersect” (Laurence Sterne, 1768).

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 81–101.

There has been the trend for the Enlightenment to be understood as a strongly cosmopolitan phenomenon. David Hume regarded Sweden in the Era of Liberty “nearest to the perfect Commonwealth among existing societies.” Jouko Nurminen cites Jonathan I. Israel, who abandons the national paradigm and classifies European eighteenth-century philosophers and philosophies on the basis of their degree of radicalism. Sweden was a periphery in the European Enlightenment and “mostly the ideas of the radical Enlightenment were avoided in Sweden. Rather than an oppositional movement, the Enlightenment took the form of an enlightened consensus” (Nurminen).

If Sweden was so perfect and not very radical, how does Thomas Thorild fit in these pictures as a radical and a cosmopolitan thinker and a political activist, in opposition to many dominant forces, and also as a passionate utopian poet and a philosopher, who praised not only reason but also weakness and imperfection as creative forces? Was he merely a peripheral thinker in the periphery? Frängsmyr does not pay any attention to Thorild’s ideas, only mentions his name in the debate about the Enlightenment in Sweden.

Thorild was an enthusiastic cosmopolite. He studied thoroughly the ideas of French and British Enlightenment (especially Voltaire, whose works he knew by heart, Rousseau, Holbach, Hume, Young, Shaftesbury etc.), made his dissertation on the critique of Montesquieu, spent two years in England publishing political pamphlets under the name “A Philosopher of the North,” and started there to collect an international network to promote his ideas. He dreamed of an utopian cosmopolitan “World Government” of the wise and collected names and addresses of people who could participate in it (Mirabeau, Mercier, Bergasse, Raynal, Wieland, Lavater, et al.). This work was interrupted by the French revolution which Thorild called “the greatest event of mankind ever since the Deluge,” and he wrote in his diary: “This Revolution saved my troubles and freed me from the role of a world-reformer. Now it is time to go

back to Sweden and establish a Nature-State in Oestrebott (Ostrobothnia).” Further knowledge of this utopian idea, which he obviously planned to realize in Finland, is not available. He started to promote cultural revolution in Sweden as a “Critic of the Critics.” For all these efforts he needed philosophical thinking which can be called not only enlightened but perhaps also utopian.

“It is one of the duties of history to wipe the makeup off the painted idols and show them as they are themselves” (Sven Lagerbring).

Ideals, idols and utopias have been constructed many times in history as imagined societies of the best possible future. The futuristic Utopia of Louis-Sebastien Mercier, *L’an 2440*, published in 1771, was translated into Swedish already as early as in 1773.

Spinoza (like David Hume) said that ethical and political prescriptions should be derived from claims about the way humans really are, not from the way that we would like them to be. Otherwise such prescriptions cannot be put into practice, to “have practical application”:

Philosophers conceive of the passions which harass us as vices into which men fall by their own fault, and therefore, generally deride, bewail, or blame them, or execrate them, if they wish to seem unusually pious. And so they think that they are doing something wonderful, and reaching the pinnacle of learning, when they are clever enough to bestow manifold praise on such human nature, as is nowhere to be found, and to make verbal attacks on that which, in fact, exists. For they conceive of men, not as they are, but as they themselves would like them to be. Whence it has come to pass, instead of ethics, they have generally written satire, and that they have never conceived a theory of politics, which could be turned to use, but such as might be taken for a chimera, or might have been formed in Utopia, or in that golden age of poets when, to be sure, there was least need of it” (Spinoza).

According to Arvidson, Thorild tried “to modernize Spinoza.” In this article it is not possible to go further to his relationship with Spinoza. I want only to mention his phrase “Spinoza, a poet, not a pantheist.” Was he in contradiction with Spinoza, because rather than ethics he wrote parodies and satire, and also criticized them, wrote rather than philosophical theories long poems and pamphlets, which could be called “verbal attacks or [...] chimeras formed in Utopia” (Spinoza)? Spinoza uses here Utopia as a place, a *topos*, or actually *ou-topos*, a place which neither exists nor has not yet become reality. As places they can be the wishful but factually unrealized history of mankind (Holbach’s Golden Age, *l’age d’or*) or the possible future of recent historical situation.

Is Utopia an unreal fictional construction? According to Marin it is a figure of a discourse that produces it by means of specific — rhetorical or poetic — discursive operation. Utopia is a figure produced as a fantasy or phantasm, “imaginary dreaming,” outside society, history and ideology. This figure plays the role of an independent and relatively free representation (utopic stage). If utopia is other than real society, and if utopic transgression is the obverse of current institutions, its critical negativity remains fictional. However in many Utopias there is an inherent idea of hope and progress in order to promote the project of perfecting the social order (Saint-Simon: “*projet de perfectionnement de l’ordre social*”). Thorild used “imaginary dreaming” as a way to a better understanding of human nature and as a way to a better future for mankind. In practice some Utopias also try to work inside their historical situation and societal trends. Utopic practice is not only the construction of a theoretical object, but the formation of its historical conditions of possibility. This formation is produced and contained within the utopic figure. It exposes courageously the aporias of its own times and its own possibilities. “Utopic practice as an active force wedges itself, or forces itself, in between reality and its Other” (Marin). If utopias are theoretically the Other, where

utopian practices are absent from practical applications, they are passive and negatively charged. If practice is connected actively to utopian ideas, utopias become active and are “charged with optimism” (Habermas).

Except social utopias there can exist rhetorical and poetical utopias. Can utopias be unknown thoughts for the philosopher to discover? Can utopias be “the utmost outreach of thinking” (Bloch, Bachelard and Barthes). “Not-yet is possible in a world which has a vision beyond its own horizon” (Bloch). Did Thorild have poetical visions on the Other of his historical reality which worked towards a future which can be called utopian?

Nature and Utopias

“Reason knows no other laws than those of Nature, than those of highest powers and highest beauties” (Thomas Thorild).

Many philosophers claim that their ideas are natural and use nature as a justification of their ideas. How do intellectual ideas become natural? Is this wishful utopian or metaphorical thinking? What is the real connection between Nature and Utopias?

Enlightenment meant knowledge of the natural world (Buffon, Holbach, Mesmer, Marat) and “all Nature was linked by a universal fluid” (Mesmer). This fluid was electricity, which ran through all living organisms and helped to sustain life by re-establishing the necessary electrical equilibrium. In 1784 Mesmer linked natural harmony — that is the physical balance of the “universal fluid” of electricity — with social and moral harmony.

“Lightning composes the world” (Heraclitus).

Born Thomas Thorén he changed his last name into Thorild, which means Thors Eld, Thor’s Fire, Thor-God’s Lightnings in ancient Scandinavian mythology. Symbolism of lightning is one of instantaneous, both in its judgment and destruction. Thorild took as his motto: “Follow the instants!” (*Följa ögonblicken!*).

Lightning was a popular political metaphor at the age of the Enlightenment. Very short Jacobin era in the French Revolution used many natural metaphors such as floods, earthquakes, mountains and swamps, volcanoes and lightnings as social metaphors. The lightning bolt — which had been a symbol of tyranny and arbitrariness in *l'Ancien Regime*, long understood as a signifier of sovereignty, as lightning bolt of absolute kings — became now an agent of revolution. For enlightened men the real question was how to control lightnings and thus lightning rods demonstrated the development of man's power over nature and they were used in the efforts of enlightened men to control nature and society. Franklin had seized lightning from heavens and the specter from tyrants. After learning to direct lightning in natural sphere, man could deploy its power in the political one. One of Franklin's supporters in France made experiments with lightning rod and was accused of witchcraft. His advocate was a young lawyer Robespierre.

By explaining the causes of lightning, philosophers and scientists hoped to remove its mystique and thereby take away some of the power and awe wielded by monarchs and religions. They sought both to enlighten and empower the people by tearing the thunderbolt from the hands of the kings and returning it to nature. The language of lightning provided a powerful metaphor for changing notions of sovereignty; it also applied the language of science to the rhetoric of political revolution. Lightning was a necessary force whose purpose was not to destroy but instead to maintain equilibrium and balance in the atmosphere or in social harmony. "The political machine never rights itself except through violent convulsions (*secousses*) like the air is purified only by storms" (Marat).

Frenchmen had truly stolen lightning from gods and kings, signifying thus a fundamental shift in power and sovereignty: "The world has changed, it should change again... Man has conquered lightning and diverted lightning from heaven [...] Everything has

changed in physical order; everything should change in the moral and political order [...] And is it not to strike the heads of the prideful that lightning is destined? Let us exercise justice by the example of nature [...] let us strike like lightning, so that even ashes of our enemies disappear from the soil of liberty [...] hurl lightning at our enemies!” (Robespierre, 1794).



The Volcano of Liberty 1792: Pure Republicanism and a regenerating fire flow from the crater of the Jacobin volcano.

“France’s regeneration and the raising of the day’s star makes us tremble with the joy of Nature” (David, 1793).

By 1793 nature seemed to have taken the legitimation of governance. Revolution was not a guarantor of individual agency or a product of human will, but instead it was a part of natural process of change. The language drawn from the natural world in revolutionary language was common, even ubiquitous, in France. Nature became a space of authority, and a basis for understanding human

relationships. In France revolutionaries seized upon natural imagery to describe the force and justice of their political activity: “pure republicanism and regenerating fire flows from the crater of the Jacobin volcano.” By 1794 France was defined as a nation which is revolutionary like nature and powerful like liberty. Nature, rather than people, became the force behind revolution: “Nature had been returned from exile” (Robespierre). This was used to justify revolutionary violence and terror as “The Terror of Natural Right.” Violence was a “Revolution of the Earth,” terrible like an earthquake where nature purifies itself through violent convulsions.

For some philosophers war was natural in positive sense: “war is a natural state among men” (Hobbes). “Messieurs, I see thick clouds swaying over our heads; nothing but a thunderbolt can disperse them [...] To War! To War!” (Robespierre, 1792). But for Holbach, an apprentice of Spinoza and one of Thorild’s intellectual heroes, peace was natural: “War is a convulsive and violent sickness of the body politics; this body is only healthy — that is to say in its natural state — when it is in peace.” Thorild shared Holbach’s opinion:

Enemies of Enlightenment, “Enemies of Light” use violence. Violence is not natural, the revolt against violence is Human Natural Right. As soon as violence ends freedom increases and uses free debates. Enlightenment creates totality and unity — if it is free. Only through Freedom can Philosophy clarify its thoughts which can forever sustain Humanity and Peace... Enlightenment shall throw away despotism and violence... All Power which is used against the Soul, is a relic of Barbarism. Then it was excusable and pardonable. But when a Nation begins to reach for Reason and Wit, the Government must have a higher one. Power is then lost. The divine condition of the State will smash the mistakes and errors not with force but just with the Light towards which it reaches (Thorild).

Thorild polemicized against Rousseau’s idea that we have abandoned the nature in favor of the society, that we have hidden

the nature and our “overcivilization” leads us away from the nature and therefore man should “return to nature” or “the state of nature.” Thorild argues that actually it is civilization that leads us to nature. We should not be pessimistic and sigh for the good days, but be optimistic and not to return back to the state of nature but instead towards a natural civilization, natural culture. In society this means a development from the primitive phase of nature to a better, cultivated time, through the time of virtue and culture:

We are destined to all we can be; everybody aspires to everything (*Alla åstunda Allt*), and all is Nature. Nature and society are basically alike. A good society is organized according to the laws of nature which are invariable. A Societal Harmony (Holbach’s *harmonie sociale*) leads us to Harmonic All-Nature (*Harmonisk Allnatur*). The way of development where the developing displaces the undeveloped leads to All-Harmony (*Allharmoni*). As Holbach says there is a difference between natural laws (*les loix naturelles*) and civil laws (*les loix civiles*). But both these elements are in a compound between each other. Only when they are in balance and in dynamic process with each other we are able to say that everything in Nature is right. Society is a power, a Harmony (*Krafternas Samverkan*) because it unifies the dispersed forces of men. All in Nature is True and Society is the perfection of Nature (Thorild).

Was this only an empty utopia or wishful thinking of a natural basis for a sketch of a peaceful Utopia? Was French revolutionary state finally not natural at all and was it necessary to think of something else?

Freedom, Sovereignty and Monarchia Mentum

Thorild shared Spinoza’s concept of Freedom: “Freedom reaches as far as one’s longings and abilities — without being restricted by others. All humans have this! Freedom can be taken or not, but no

human being can neither nullify nor destroy the laws of his nature [...] man can deviate from morals but not from nature” (Thorild).

In 1792 he wrote an article “On the Liberty of Common Reason” (*Om det Allmänna Förståndets frihet*). Here he appealed sharply to the Sovereignty of the People: “Know your value, Citizens! You are Everything in this country, which lives by your Highness and Power. These Laws are your Laws. This Brilliance which shines in public, is, or should be, Light of your Independence.” This was one of Rousseau’s main ideas which has its roots in antique times. Now it was an expression of the freedom demands of the uprising bourgeoisie which aimed at destroying the old feudal society by opposing all God’s Grace, all self-evident natural-born privileges. Thorild connects this to rationalism and talks about “Common Reason” or “Common Wit”:

Reason is First in All. This, based on the fundamental Law of the Soul, is Free; when a decent, great Man upraises it is only because he Sees, that he Understands, something better. Society is an Association to promote Common happiness and blessing (*Allmän Lycksalighet*) of the Reason of All, and this means Merit and Virtue. The Government itself is nothing else but a whole and a part of Common Reason. The domain of Reason is nothing but the Truth itself or the real circumstances of a Thing. And without knowing this what is there to be done by a mortal? Common Reason stands in analogy with Individual Reason: No human thinks but only through a combination of his scattered thoughts; and as little thinks a State but through given knowledge and combination of all her Citizens Reason and happy thoughts (Thorild).

Thorild unites the doctrine of Common reason with the Sovereignty of the People. Only when Common Reason has reached a certain level, Freedom is possible. The development stage of the state is therefore dependent on the degree of development of the Enlightenment. In Sweden Andreas af Botin declared that Enlightenment as knowledge and illumination (*upplysning*), is directly linked to progress and change that take place in one way or another.

er in underdeveloped, “not progressing” societies. People were not enlightened; on the contrary, their lack of enlightenment proved their underdevelopment.

According to Thorild Enlightenment stems first from the development stage of Philosophers, Genius and Wits:

Human society is a part and a reflection of Nature and it functions according to its common laws. The Genius, that is to say, those who have penetrated its secrets are therefore the only ones to enlighten principles of governance and should therefore stand in the leadership of the Society. An establishment of an association of the wise, The Kingdom of the Wise, *Monarchia Mentum*, is needed to lead the people to a new stage of development. A wise government can only through wisdom guide the thoughts of a country. In good societies, already in ancient times, always the free citizens made the laws. The very few leaders came from the Wise. Rank gave neither reason nor reliability. A higher light, a more divine fire, is needed for the welfare of community. In Germany some similar answers were given by the poet Klopstock in his thoughts on “Gelehrtenrepublik” (Thorild).

Can this be unified with the idea of People’s Sovereignty? Can this lead to the despotic State of the Learned and to the tyranny of the intellectuals and eventually to social Dystopias because it excludes natural freedom of the people?

In the first place Thorild’s utopian Intellectual Aristocratism has its point against despotism:

A powerful and stable government can never be built on Power, Violence and Oppression. New Intellectual Aristocratism (Aristos meant the Best) is aimed at aristocratic society’s principle of choices which has now turned into kakistocracy (“*kakistokratik*”—Kakistos meant the Worst). Innate abilities and rank shall exit as starting points in the fight for high and leading positions and shall be replaced by merit, talent and noble will (Thorild).

According to Voltaire and many other Enlightenment philosophers, philosophers utilize the true interests of society and people. He did not want to know anything about people's power but spoke in favor of enlightened despotism. Rousseau was on the opposite side of Voltaire: his "General will" (*volonté générale*) presumed people's power, whose judgement was a genuine expression of people's wishes which only could be disturbed by the interference of the wise. Thorild does not believe in the people's power as such. It takes enlightened people to create real power. His enlightened optimism is so big that he figures that such enlightened people's power brings about almost automatically a government of the philosophers. But he demands at the same time high political rationalism and virtue among the wise, which means an absolute release from egoism, group interests and dependence on the milieu (Montesquieu). The role of the wise is restricted: its virtue is only to select the best of the wise and let them shine their light. This also shall make ultimately laws unnecessary because there exists no problems between the wise and the people. The wisdom of the government can lead the people to decide everything with the word and the thought.

Respublica Mundi

"The Thinking World is a Republic; there man shall begin to understand the Spirit of Freedom" (Thorild).

Thorild combines the supremacy of wise with absolute Liberty of the Press. All different interests and ideas can talk and freely fight against each other and so the best and most useful for nation and people shall be crystallized as an outcome of this process. Peace, happiness and virtue shall according to Thorild be clear consequences of the liberty of expression:

Enlightenment without freedom is sterile. Freedom without Enlightenment is barbarism in disguise. The task of Philosophy is not to raise

its own value but to help People to know its own value. Liberty of the Press is as natural right as the right to light (*absolut tryckfrihet är lika naturlig rätt som rätten till ljuset*). The home country of Philosophy is the country where Freedom lives. The task of the Philosopher is to know the possibilities of free mankind (Thorild).

In the idea of “Natural Republicanism” (he uses this word) Thorild sees democratism emerging. The opinion of the people that shall become Common Reason makes last decisions. The task of the enlightened people is to create freedom: “Freedom of all best reasons is a way to peoples emancipation” (Thorild). Freedom of people starts with the recognition of “natural highness of women gender.” He wrote in 1793 a sharp short pamphlet *Om kvinnökönets naturliga höghet*. This was one of the first great philosophical openings towards women’s emancipation at the same time as Mary Wollstonecraft did same work. August Strindberg called this “Magna Charta of Women’s Liberation.”

Poetry and Cultural Revolution

“Classical poetry is the poetry of revolution” (Osip Mandelstam).

True revolution needs as its means also strong democratic poetry which abandons classicism and the pursuit of perfect rhyme in favor of new poetry, often without rhyme. Thorild was one of the first democratic poets in Europe and his “Göta poems” (*Götamannasånger och dalvisor*) were greatly admired by August Strindberg.

“Free arts are not free in Sweden. Art and literature are the fields of true freedom to come” (Thorild). In 1791–2 Thorild published a series of articles under the heading “Critique of Critics” (*En Critic öfver critiker*). The critique of literature was one of the fields to promote freedom which was notified also in Germany in Franz Mehring’s *Die Lessing-Legende*:

Auf dem Gebiete der Philosophie und Theologie, der Rechts- und Staatswissenschaft lagen die Fußangeln des fürstlichen Despotismus; unter seinem bleiernen Joche war längst alles politische Leben erstickt; die schöne Literatur bot einstweilen den einzigen Kampfplatz, auf dem die bürgerlichen Klassen um ihre soziale Emanzipation ringen konnten.

A new Magna Charta of Human Reason, a declaration of human rights in the area of reason, is needed to be established during the great process of Enlightenment. This means a new legislation of critical methods against old laws of repression and terror, "Legislation in the world of Reason and Wit," a safe against them in form of a Constitution and Republic of the Wise. It was a cultural revolution, a revaluation of all values. The ruling power of taste — "*le gout française*" or court-suitable taste — is not only dogmatic in classical sense, but reactionary and a weapon in the hands of repression, and Thorild's own revolt against it in the field of literature is a political revolt or even more profound revolution: "The authorities have chosen Blind Faith, deism in religion and dead classicism in arts, to be their leading Star which is dark; the Enlightenment emancipates itself from this and leans on Light and Pantheistic and Materialistic trends." These trends were considered extremely radical and very dangerous for the society and Christian faith. They also led Thorild into big troubles, which is a story that I cannot treat shortly here.

Classicists, or arbiters of taste, wanted to go back to nature by designing parks, radicals wanted to go back to nature itself, as a wild and living organism in itself. This can be applied in every field: senses and sensibility, natural religion, natural law, art, science and literature. "Nature is powerful and great, pretentious court-life is small and weak. Nature is infinite and has infinite opportunities. In literature the voice from the court is a mockery against the real voice of nature and freedom" (Thorild). Wild poetry is revolt against pseudo-classist form-culture, which Thorild

calls "chameleonic art" (*kameolontisk konst*) that lives in the air and changes its colors according to who is in power. True poetry must paint with natural colors: "If my colors are awful when I paint the Evil, so I choose the most beautiful and noble colors to describe the Good. Words are a writer's colors. It may be easy to own colors but it is not easy to do a painting." Thorild criticizes the pseudo-poetry of French taste powerless, pleasing, flattering — and because of these: unnatural or not nature at all (*Onatur*).

Thorild attacked furiously Johan Kellgren's literary society, *Utile dulci*, which had over 500 members, accusing it of trying to make poetry out of economic interests and utility. Private needs can be of benefit for the court as for the public (*allmänhet och menighet*). The difference is to whom they appeal. According to Kellgren literature is meant only for the chosen ones (in Finland Ahlqvist: *ulosvalitut*). For Thorild it is meant ultimately for the whole People. Literature is not for the aristocrats and royalists, it belongs to the People. And to exclude wild and natural poetry from literature will be a slander against the People.

For the arbiters of taste it was natural to speak about "mistakes" in poetry and for them the task of the critique is to find out these mistakes and exclude and uproot them out of literature, which Thorild called a raging to see everything in its mistakes (*raseriet att se allting i sina fel*). Fight against bad poets, also in Finland against Kivi, was marked by an orthodoxy in writing and thinking. Snellman however defended Kivi's right to do mistakes quoting Thorild: A work of art is not done because of its faults but of its achievements. Do not call attention to mistakes but to the merits (*Man skall inte räkna felen utan ta fasta på förtjänsten*). Pseudo-classical dogmatists called the poetry of Thorild epileptic and insane, chaotic disorder and mess in his brain (*"kaotiska virrvarret i Thorilds hjärna"*), "lunatic asylum poetry" and socially anarchist. "*Ni rime, ni raison!*" (Kellgren). But for Thorild even wild or bad poets the have Rights of the Citizens in the Republic of Reason.

Classical poets want to be court-suitable but become court-jesters while the true citizens of the Republic instead want to inspire the sense of freedom of the people. Real reason for the critique of the bad poets was however their inherent radicalism.

Can childhood be radical? The dawning, nascent and emerging free spirit must do also mistakes before it can achieve truths. Dawning free spirit may babble like a baby, it can be full of fumble and stumble, it can limp and bungle, but only because it is in its childhood. Age of Childhood will become the Age of Manhood and Virility and after that Age of Law and legislation. "The age of virility and manhood is as conformed with nature as is golden age of childhood with sincerity" (Holbach: "*L'age viril est autant conforme a la nature de l'homme que l'age d'or l'enfance est de la foiblesse*").

Original Genius makes laws himself, in the sense that he bursts out of given conventions and goes for a voyage of discovery in nature's infinite world. It has a right to do mistakes. The new and never before sought has a value in itself and for itself even if it fails in results, because mankind must carry out experiments to find the true way. Philosophy needs to go beyond its horizons, it should be not critical in the negative sense but charged with optimism: "Freedom of the Genius and Freedom of the dawning spirit is the only way forward. The task of the Genius (*Snillet*) is not to lower itself to all, but to heighten all towards itself (*inte att nedlåta sig til alla, utan at uplyfta alla til sig*). The highest power of the Spirit is the highest Harmony. Intellectual Beautiness and Political Beautiness create a Totality (*Dygd är mänskliga Själens eller Varelsens högsta Kraft med högsta Harmonie. Intellektuella Skönhet och Politiska Skönhet bildar en Enhet*)" (Thorild).

What is the role and task of philosophers? To promote systems or freedom of the spirit? Already Aristotle pointed out the difference between aporias and systems. Thorild uses two words: those who pursue the intellectual beauty of an empty style use what he

calls “*system-snit*” (*stil*, style, that is in the guise of a style of system) which easily and almost imperceptibly changes into a “*systems-nit*” (*fanatiska*, fanatics of system). The task of philosophy is not to start from readymade logics and systems or to recycle the styles of systems, which may turn to intellectual fanatics, but “to start anew” (Merleau-Ponty) from the changing reality and its aporias.

What can be learned from the poets? Nothing or everything? Lessing said: “If pomp and etiquettes make machines out of men, it is the task of the poet to make men again out of these machines.” For Thorild “the real task of Poetry is to learn Philosophy to speak.” Are poetical utopias “babbles which philosophy uses in its age of childhood when it does not yet know how to talk” (Thorild)? How sincere are these babbles and even mistakes? What can we learn from childhood? What does sincerity mean in poetry? According to Eino Leino, another Finnish poet, Aleksis Kivi, who admired Thorild and owned his collected works, was not much respected and thus not understood by the so-called “*ohjelmasuomalaiset*,” program-oriented Fennomans, because of his “most subtle nuances” (*hiuksenhieno havainnointi*) in poetry.

Great things must be said greatly for sure, but should subtle things be said subtly? What if sincere mistakes are in search of a greater sensibility? How important are the thoughts of Thorild on Holbach’s sensualism and its role in radical revolutionary philosophy? Can Thorild be connected to the ideas of “the politics of *Sensibilité*” by poet Sylvain Marechal? Is “poetical dreaming” a sincere response to too abstract intellectual principles? Is it thus also radical?

Thorild opposed, in his own words a “Kantian notion of transcendental tramps,” that intellectual principle, which expresses the spontaneity of the Ego, is a leading and active principle, in which activity is clad in the form of the synthesis, while sensuality is a passive principle. Sensuality for Thorild is an active force in poeti-

cal dreaming and action that follows it. "Utopian poetics pursues to sense sensitively it's time and future. Poetic utopias try to extend senses and thinking and to civilize passions to a higher level" (Barthes).

Freedom has been used very freely in philosophy and history. "Liberty cannot be built on Freedom," said Robespierre. Metaphysics of freedom says that freedom is an Idea. Physics of freedom says that it is a Matter. Why are Utopias formed as ideas or as matter? Why as a Topos and why not as a leap into future intellectually? Are there actually two Utopias in the same manner as there exists "two faces of Enlightenment"? How radical ideas of freedom and democracy are needed to establish a true kingdom of liberty? And more precisely: how radical a life can an intellectual lead? Maybe a better understanding of Radical Enlightenment needs a better understanding of radical passions and radical life of a philosopher at his time. Maybe Thorild has some enchanting answers to these questions and some disturbing questions to these answers? Is it worthwhile to study his thinking, not only through his faults and achievements, but also as a process, as a philosophical episode and as one example of radical philosophical life in the historical reality of the changing world in age of Enlightenment?

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**THE FIRST FINNISH UTOPIAN?
GABRIEL ISRAEL HARTMAN AND HIS POEM
TO THE MAGISTERIAL PROMOTION OF 1805**

Vesa Oittinen

The Magisterial Promotion of 1805 at the Royal Academy of Turku was held amidst an atmosphere of imminent war. On 28 June, when the public attended the celebration that, according to the academic statutes, was held every fifth year to nominate the new magisters, Sweden had already broken off diplomatic relations with France. Later, in the autumn of the same year, Sweden joined the Anti-Napoleon Coalition that consisted of England, Russia and Austria. By 31 October, 1805, the untenable position of King Gustav IV Adolf, who felt that Napoleon was nothing less than the Beast of the Apocalypse, had led to a declaration of war against France. Although this imprudent step might have had disastrous consequences for Sweden, all ended happily, since before the Swedish troops could reach the war theatre in Central Europe, Napoleon had obtained a magnificent victory at Austerlitz, and the Coalition was dissolved for a while.

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 102–122.

However, it is important to have this background in mind when trying to understand the poem that Gabriel Israel Hartman, docent of philosophy and the librarian of the academy, presented at the promotion. Although it was customary to present a poem, often of more or less didactic character, at these jubilees, Hartman's poem nevertheless raised the eyebrows of many listeners. Captioned as *Den tredje Odlingen* (The Third Culture), it presented for a wider public a social and cultural utopia that Hartman had earlier cultivated only in a small circle of a secret society.

The philosopher in Turku

Hartman (1776–1809) may be the most intriguing personality of the Finnish Enlightenment. He never had a prominent social position, instead having had to accept modest and poorly-paid academic jobs. The professorship of philosophy he had applied for in 1804, was granted to another man, the poet Franz Michael Franzén. As a philosopher, however, Hartman had high ambitions, claiming that he had created an altogether new system of philosophy. He had lectured on this new system at least since 1804, but his book on the subject was published somewhat later, in 1807 and 1808, with the title *Kunskapslära* (Doctrine of Cognition). It is a singular book,¹ revealing its author as having an acute mind. Despite this, Hartman's *magnum opus* did not arouse much interest — partly because the reading public in Finland and Sweden that could

¹ Suffice it to mention that Hartman was the first author to use the term “gnoseology” in the modern that is — Kantian and post-Kantian — sense. He stressed that the “Doctrine of Knowledge,” for which he himself gives the Latin and Greek counterparts *scientia cognitionis* and *gnoseologia*, was a new discipline that was “hitherto unheard-of” (*Kunskapslära*, vol. I, § 1). In a comment on this subject, Hans Vaihinger noted that Ernst Reinhold should have been the first to use the word “gnoseology” (*Erkenntnistheorie*) in the contemporary sense in 1834, but it seems that Hartman preceded him by a quarter of century (see H. Vaihinger's note in *Philosophische Monatshefte*. Bd. 12, 1876).

understand such a philosophical work was minimal compared to the more populous European countries, but even because more powerful influences, the philosophies of Kant and German Idealism, soon superseded it.



Gabriel Israel Hartman.

A miniature portrait by W. Le Moine, 1805, Turku.

In my previous studies, I have attempted to analyze Hartman's philosophy, which hitherto has been largely neglected.¹ Generally

¹ See, for example: Vesa Oittinen, "Der Akt als Fundament des Bewusstseins? Zur Differenz zwischen G.I. Hartman und nachkantischer Transzendentalphilosophie," in: *Nordeuropäische Beiträge aus den Human- und Gesellschaftswissenschaften* Bd. 9, Frankfurt am Main/Bern: Peter Lang 1996; Vesa Oittinen, "Ein nordischer Bewußtseinsphilosoph. "Reinholdianische" Themen bei G.I. Hartman," in: Martin Bondeli & W.H. Schrader (Eds.), *Die Philosophie Karl Leonhard Reinholds*, Fichte-Studien, Supplementa, Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi 2003. P. 55–75.

speaking, Hartman's philosophy received decisive impulses from the Kantian and post-Kantian discussion around 1800, but it is an attempt to reconcile the Kantian "Copernican turn" with the traditions of earlier Enlightenment thought. Consequently, Hartman rejects both Fichte's version of the Transcendental Philosophy and the German Idealism that, at this time, was already nascent and had in many ways been anticipated by the Swedish philosopher Benjamin Höijer (d. 1812).

There are some striking parallels between Hartman and the so-called Elementary Philosophy developed by Karl Leonhard Reinhold in the 1790s. Like Reinhold, Hartman starts from the "Expression of Consciousness" (in Reinhold: *Satz des Bewusstseins*) which consists of the subject, the object and the consciousness itself connecting them. However, whilst Reinhold understood his Elementary Philosophy as a continuation and systematization of Kant's Criticism, Hartman was a resolute opponent of Kantianism. He stood on the positions of the earlier Enlightenment, which, like the representatives of the German *Popularphilosophie* of the late 18th century, saw Kant's attempt to show the limits of reason as an attack on the main principle of the Enlightenment itself. Hartman's leitmotif was to save the Enlightenment by elevating it on a new level, not to insist on its limits as Kant (seemingly) did. This is where the core of Hartman's utopianism and its philosophical grounding lay.

For Hartman, the "grounding" (in Hartman's original text *grundläggning*, which is a direct rendering into Swedish of the German expression *Grundlegung*, which was *en vogue* in Central European discussion at the time) of knowledge was important not only for theoretical reasons, but for practical reasons too. Both Hartman and Reinhold thought that, for the morality, a *fundamentum inconcussum* should be found, which could serve as an antidote to the relativism proposed by many Enlightenment thinkers. At the same time, this fundament for morality should be immedi-

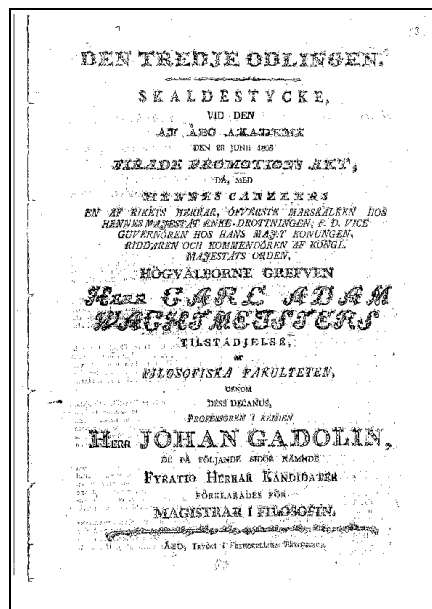
ately evident for everyone. In this respect, Hartman's viewpoint is again close to that of Reinhold, who offered, as Sabine Roehr writes, "a new kind of 'popular philosophy', which had only the name in common with the 'popular philosophy' of Feder, Garve and Nicolai." At the same time, however, Reinhold did not make any concessions to criticism of Reason formulated by the *Sturm und Drang* movement or Jacobi's "philosophy of faith."¹ Like Hartman's "expression of consciousness," the "proposition of consciousness" of Reinhold had the advantage of being both a rational principle and attainable to every man.

In addition to his *Kunskapslära*, which presented his theoretical philosophy, Hartman worked on a book on practical philosophy, which never went into print. It seems for a long time that the manuscript of this book had disappeared, but in the 1990s the Finnish philosopher Georg Henrik von Wright managed to find substantial fragments of the work — most of them written by Hartman's own hand — in the Russian State Library in Moscow.² The manuscript bears the title *Bestämmelselära* (Doctrine of Destination), which Hartman believed to be the "practical" pendant to the Doctrine of Knowledge. The title alludes to the discussions in the German Enlightenment, which had already been stirred up from 1746, when J.J. Spalding published his *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* (The Destination of Man), a book that had "a huge public impact" as it started a discussion that led to the old Christian idea of Man being replaced by a new concept of humanity as creators of their own

¹ Sabine Roehr, *A Primer on German Enlightenment. With a Translation of Karl Leonhard Reinhold's The Fundamental Concepts and Principles of Ethics*, Columbia/London: Univ. of Missouri Press 1995. P. 142–144.

² The story of the discovery and the contents of Hartman's *Bestämmelselära* are described in: Georg Henrik von Wright, Vesa Oittinen, "G.I. Hartmans *Kunskapslära*. Ett ofullbordat filosofiskt systembygge," in: *Historiska och litteraturhistoriska studier*. 77, Helsingfors 2002. P. 71–104.

destiny.¹ In the time Hartman was most active, that is, the first years of the 19th century, this discussion had again become actual as Fichte published his *Bestimmung des Menschen* in 1800. However, Hartman's and Fichte's doctrines of human destination do differ considerably in that whilst Fichte followed Kant in rejecting the eudemonistic ethics of happiness, Hartman expressly built his ethics solely on happiness (*sällhet*) as the highest good.



Hartman's poem at the magisterial promotion of 1805 in Turku.
National Library of Finland.

Even before the promotion poem and the publication of *Kunskapslära*, Hartman was known publicly for his poems and articles

¹ Roehr, *op. cit.*, p. 46. "Destiny" may not be an adequate English translation of the German *Bestimmung*, which has the additional connotation of "definition," "determination". Thus, the new Enlightenment idea of *menschliche Bestimmung* is that humanity is called upon a self-determination of what it wants to do.

in the local gazette *Åbo Tidning*. In 1799, he had published a poem entitled *Til den lidande Menskligeten* (To the Suffering Humanity), in which he laments à la Rousseau the incompleteness of the world and declares that only a return to the Nature will cure Man of his self-induced contradictions. Another interesting work by Hartman was a short story *En dröm* (A Dream), published in the same gazette in 1803, which has been described as the first Finnish science-fiction. The author describes a presentation of a microscope in 1899 — over a century into the future, where it turns out that the worlds include smaller and smaller worlds *in infinitum*.¹

Sällskap för Sanning och Sällhet

The eighteenth century was generally, and in Sweden especially, an age of secret societies, which foreshadowed — or functioned as an ersatz to — the more developed modern civil society. These societies ranged from freemasonry lodges to seamen's societies and many of them actually functioned only as an alibi for eating and drinking. The Aurora Society, founded in 1770, has become famous in Finnish cultural history. It can count as its members such well-known names as Porthan, Mennander, Kalm, Clewberg, Calonius, Chydenius and other prominent representatives of the enlightened academic élite.

According to some records, a further secret society, the *Sällskapet för Sanning och Sällhet* (The Society for Truth and Happiness — the name reflects the idea of the unity of theoretical and practical philosophy), was founded in Turku in the 1790s, and included younger members of the Academy, such as the poet

¹ See Jari Koponen's comment in: Jari Koponen and Vesa Sisättö (eds.), *Aivo-peili. Autonomian ajan tieteiskirjallisuutta*, Avain 2011. According to Koponen, Hartman's sci-fi narrative seems to be the first of its kind in world literature; Fitz-James O'Brien's *The Diamond Lens* from 1858 is usually regarded as the first story built on the microcosm motive.

Franzén. Unlike the established and elitist Aurora Society, whose interest lay mainly in promoting science and historical research, the new society had a clear social-reformatory scope. There are indications that Rousseau belonged to its favorite philosophers, but Schiller, too, was admired. Although it is difficult to reconstruct the activity of this society, it seems that Hartman played a prominent role there. Few documents have survived, but the National Library of Helsinki contains a short speech which Hartman held in a meeting of this society.¹ Although the speech is not dated, it must have been written around 1800.

In this speech, Hartman converses primarily on the problem of the “suffering Mankind,” which he presents in the language of Rousseau’s critique on civilization. However, his approach differs from that of Rousseau in that he does not see the “heart” or the will as being guilty of the misfortunes of human social life, but, above all, the understanding:

Do not seek the origins of the calamities and sufferings of humanity, of the corruption of manners which dishonours and yet vexes the people, in the heart or the will of Man, but seek it in his understanding. Those laws that determine the direction of the desires and thus prepare the way to the deeds are eternally unchangeable — that is, we desire that which in our thoughts presents itself us as good [...] But the understanding can lose its way in innumerable manners, and indeed it does so. All this evil of which Man laments are caused by its desires...²

¹ I have published the text as an appendix to my study on Hartman, see: Oittinen, *Der Akt als Fundament des Bewusstseins*. P. 134–143.

² Oittinen. *Op. cit.* P. 134: “Söken icke Källorna til Menklighetens olyckor och lidanden, til det sedeförderf som vanhedrat och ännu qual detta slägtet, uti Meniskjans hjerta eller villja, utan söken dem i hennes förstånd. De äro evigt oföränderliga dessa lagar som bestämma begärens Riktning och derigenom förbereda gerningarne — nämligen at Vi begäre det som uti tanken framställes såsom godt [...] Men förståndets förvillelser kunna vara otaliga, och äro det.

This is a methodologically important point, since if the squalors and deficiencies of civilized life are produced above all by the erroneous ideas created by the understanding, the only way to correct societies is not to turn back to primitive life, as Rousseau recommended, or at least seemed to such moderate Enlighteners as Voltaire to recommend (*“J’ai reçu, Monsieur, votre nouveau livre contre le genre humain [...] On n’a jamais tant employé d’esprit à vouloir nous rendre bêtes; il prend envie de marcher à quatre pattes quand on lit votre ouvrage”*¹). Instead, Hartman sees the solution to the crisis of civilization in moving forward; that is, enforcing the already existing Enlightenment and driving it towards new heights:

Only by the well-doing influences of the Enlightenment, only by the light of a more purified understanding, in which the real side of the things becomes obvious, the desires get the direction they need to have [in order to] unite happiness and virtue. — It is this general light of the Enlightenment which makes the delusions to dissolve like the darkness of night cedes for sunlight, and the crimes and vices become ashamed to show themselves in their invariably foul shape.²

Another important consequence of this position is that the sicknesses and faults of present forms of social life are best overcome by giving to the Reason a stable foundation, which is done by grounding it so that it becomes undisputed. It is specifically for this reason that the philosophy becomes so important; in philoso-

Det är dess drifter som förorsakar allt detta Onda hvaröfver menniskjan klagar...”

¹ From Voltaire’s letter to Rousseau, 30 August, 1755.

² Oittinen. *Op. cit.* P. 137: “Endast igenom Uplysningens välgörande inflytelser, endast igenom et Renare förstånds ljus, hvori tingens sanna sida blir uppen bar [sic!], och begären vinna den riktning som de böra hafva til förening, sällhet och dygd. — Det är vid Uplysningens allmänne dag som förvillelserna skola bortsmälta som Nattens mörker för Solljuset, och som brotten och Lasterna skola blygas at visa sig i sin oföränderligt ohyggliga gestaltt.”

phy, the most important part is the theory of cognition, which will show us how apodictic certainty is possible and how it can be obtained.

For Hartman, it was quite clear that the Enlightenment had not yet exhausted its potential. A look at the present-day situation of the European Enlightenment shows that the “foundations and value of thought” have not yet been established, the difference between justice and wrong is yet uncertain, the destination of Man is not yet found, and the “nature of our real happiness” remains obscure:

Has yet even one of those truths which all are important for the humanity been solved and determined? Have the foundations and the value of the thinking been determined? Is the difference between justice and injustice obvious? Is our destination found and specified? Is the nature of our real happiness known and recognized? — Ah! How far are we yet from this all?¹

For Hartman, the reformation of philosophy is, if not the only, then always the best way to find answers to these ardent questions posed by humanity. In the final passages of his speech, he hints that a solution might be near: “No! This Light will rise, and the humanity will have reason to be happy that it exists.” The solution is the philosophical system that Hartman himself has been developing in recent years. Although it is still at the development stage, Hartman asserted that if he can find the answer to the question of “which is the first thing in our knowledge,” we can determine what is our destination and what our real happiness consists of, and he exhorts his listeners to join into the common project:

¹ Oittinen. *Op. cit.* p. 138: “Är någon enda sanning af alla dem som äro viktige för menskligheten afgjord och bestämd? Äro tankens Grunder och värde fastställda? Är skilnaden mellan rätt och orätt uppenbar? Är vår bestemmelse funnen och utvecklad? Är naturen af vår verkliga sällhet känd och erkänd? — Ach! Huru långt äre vi ännu derifrån?”

If you, by fixing your attentive eye upon the results of my efforts of thought, find anything valuable in them, so will I, [starting] from the ultimate groundings of knowledge, where I by the means of a highest speculation shall dispel all the absurdities of speculation, [and proceeding to] the application of knowledge to our refinement and happiness. [That is,] from the answer to the question “What does that which is primary in our knowledge consist of?” to decide what consists our destination, our true happiness, and through which means we can obtain it — develop my whole philosophical system. I expect to receive advice from your examination, light from your knowledge and support and help from your virtues...¹

What Hartman here had only professed in the closed circle of a secret society, he made public when the first opportunity to do it appeared. He was invited to write the poem to the magisterial promotion, a task he gladly accepted.

The Promotion Poem of 1805

In *Den tredje Odlingen*, Hartman first describes, in somewhat stodgy verse and with some horror, the political upheavals of the day. He writes that the “shadows of grief and crime” will not cede and the “egoism” rampages overall, “stamping out all the feelings for the rights of the brethren”:

¹ Oittinen, *op. cit.*, p. 142: “Om Ni, då ni fästen et granskande öga vid resultaterna af min tankemöda finner något Värde deri, skall jag, ifrån de yttersta Kunskapens grunder, där jag genom höjden af speculation ville störta alla Speculationens orimligheter, intil Kunskapens tillämpning til vår förädling och Sällhet ifrån at besvara den frågan: Hvad är det första i våra Kunskaper, intil at afgöra den [:] Hvartil äro vi bestämde, hvar i består vår sanna sällhet, och genom hvilka medel, kunne vi vinna den? utveckla hela mit system [i] Philosophien. Jag väntar igernom Eder granskning Råd och Ljus af Edra Kunskaper och stöd och hjälp af Edra Dygder...”

*Se Egoismen i människans hjerta
 qväfver all känsla för Medbröders rätt:
 skyr inga brott, inga svekfulla sätt:
 rörs ej af smärta.*

*Än emot våldets besoldade härar
 folkslagen fåfängt få söka et värn,
 då **han** med härjarens mordlystna järn
 verlden förfarar.¹*

Of course, the emphasized “he”, who “with the murderous iron / Terrifies the world” is Napoleon Bonaparte.

After these initial comments on the political situation at the time, Hartman goes over to the motives he had already developed in his secret society speech. In short, he says, in the “depth of time,” one sees but darkness. It was different in earlier times: in ancient Greece beauty and taste reigned supreme and the philosophers were enlivened by freedom; after the crumbling of Greek culture, the torch of genius shined in Rome. But the world of antiquity perished, and upon its ruins a new European culture emerged, that of the Enlightenment. However, it soon became obvious that even Europe “could well master the art of murdering and torturing.” The enlightened Europe has boasted of its excellence, but there is actually much to wish for:

¹ Lo, the Egoism in the heart of Man
 Stifles every feeling of the right of the brethren:
 Does not startle any crimes, any deceit:
 Is not moved by pain.

Against the hired armies of violence
 Yet the nations have in vain sought escape,
 As he with the murderous iron
 Terrifies the world.

*Ach, Europa! med ljuset du skryter!
 Döfvad af lofsångens smekande rop,
 hör du nej mera den furiehop
 kringom dig ryter.*

[...]

*Har ditt upplysningsbegär ej förgiftat
 Fredliga folkslayers sällare lott?
 ryser du ej för de qval och de brott,
 hvilka de stiftat?*

*Än dina lärde, med vanvettets ifver,
 tvista om grunder för sanning och dygd:
 än dina vise, förnuftet till blygd
 tro föreskrifver.¹*

These strophes show Hartman as a critic of the Enlightenment, “from the Left” rather than from conservative positions. Like such authors as Abbé Raynal, whose *Histoire des deux Indes* condemned European colonialism, Hartman sees the actions of the “enlightened Europe” in not just a positive light. In fact, the pro-

¹ Ah, Europe! You boast of having light!
 Deafened by the flattering sounds of panegyrics,
 you do not hear any more that heap of furies
 Howling around you.

[...]

Has not your desire of enlightenment been poisoned
 The happier lot of peaceful nations?
 Are you not shivering for the suffer and the crimes
 caused by it?

Your learned men, with a madman’s zeal
 Are yet disputing on the grounds of truth and virtue:
 Your sages, infamously for the reason
 Yet prescribe the faith.

ject of the Enlightenment is far from being completed, since a firm foundation for knowledge and virtue has not yet been discovered. Furthermore, some even have suggested an escape into religious faith as the only remedy from the insecurities created by a half-hearted Enlightenment. As Hartmann proclaims, with unmistakably Rousseauian tones, this Europe has not drunk from the fountain of truth nor learned from Nature. Nonetheless, a new epoch is dawning, the epoch of the third Enlightenment:

*Frid vare menskjan! — des möda har hunnit
öfver det andra upplysningens steg.¹*

As in Greece, the arts are flourishing again, the taste has spread out into societies and the fruits of culture have become visible to all. Unfortunately, the Enlightenment had hitherto been content with “the charm of superficiality.” Although the Enlightenment did not know “how to combine duty and happiness” (an allusion to Kant’s moral philosophy!), it was “insecure in its path towards the happiness.” That is why a new, third phase of culture, a higher form of Enlightenment must come:

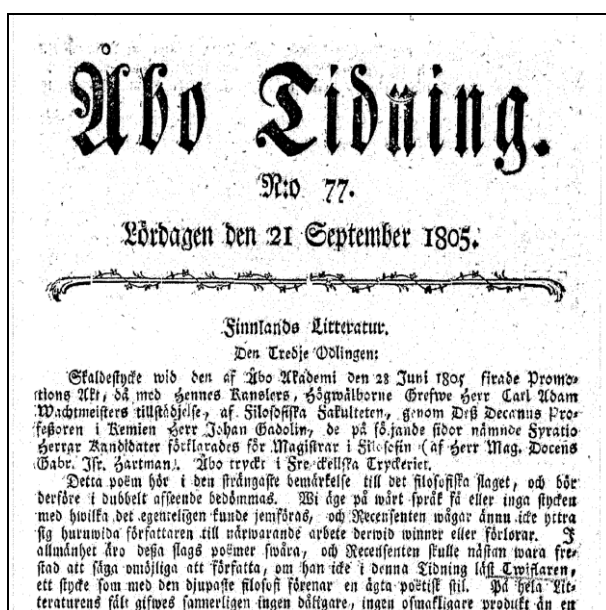
*Snart skall den tredje förädlingen börja:
snart skall man skönja bestämmelsens stråt:
fatta dess renhet — ej lämna sig åt
villornas mörja:*

*skall i naturen och tankan erfara
Sanningens, jemviktens, ordningens lag:
och vid des enkla, förädlande dag
sällhetsvärd vara.²*

¹ Peace to the Man! — its efforts have reached
Over the second step of the Enlightenment.

² Soon will the third [stage of] refinement begin:
soon one will have insight into the path of the destination:

Now “Liberty will reign with Benevolence”, and there are no more egoists, tyrants or slaves, concludes Hartman his poem. The men of this coming final phase of culture will live all the days of their lives without sorrows.



Åbo Tidning of September 21, 1805,
with a comment on the poem of Hartman by an anonymous author

It is difficult to say how Hartman's contemporaries in Turku viewed the utopian declarations of the docent of philosophy in their academy. However, it is possible, even probable that he was

comprehend its purity — not succumbing to
the muddle of illusions:

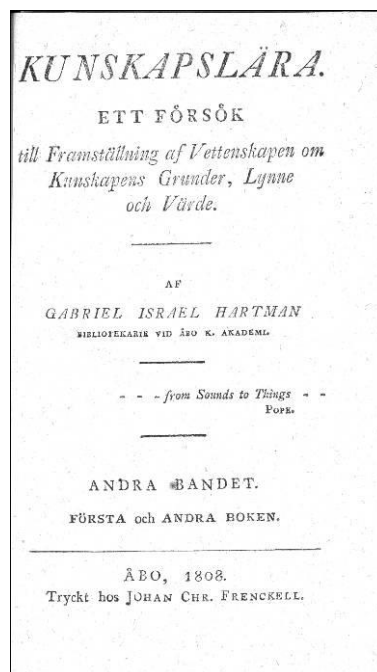
shall experience in Nature and in thought
The law of Truth, equilibrium, order:
and in its simple, ennobling light
Be worth of happiness.

not taken at all seriously as a thinker and was instead regarded as a dreamer, a *Schwärmer*. This is indicated already by the fact that Hartman never obtained any important academic posts at his university and remained a docent and poorly paid librarian. Moreover, soon after the magisterial promotion, an anonymous review of Hartman's poem was published in the local gazette *Åbo Tidning* was published an anonymous review of Hartman's poem. The review was almost surely written by Professor J.F. Wallenius, who had followed the newly deceased Porthan as the *eloquentiae professor* of the Academy. Although Wallenius's critique was written in an outwardly polite manner, its tone was mainly ironic. According to Wallenius, didactic poems — "versed metaphysics" — such as the one by Hartman, were generally not preferable and, even worse, Hartman's attacks against the Enlightenment could not be tolerated. Wallenius was clearly bothered by Hartman's radicalism, although it did not have any politically dangerous — that is, Jacobin — tones, but was, instead, a diffuse and utopian depiction of what a "true" Enlightenment should be. As we have seen, Hartman had insisted that contemporary Enlightenment thought was insufficient and had not been able to answer to the demands for grounding human happiness.

Here is not the place to give an account of the discussion on Hartman's poem in *Åbo Tidning*, despite the fact that it has some interest as the first modern literary polemics in Finland.¹ Hartman did not want to give in a newspaper polemics any exhaustive answer that would have convinced his opponents that his views were well grounded. Instead, he hurried to publish his *chef d'oeuvre*, the *Kunskapslära*, the book that should finally resolve the main problem of the Enlightenment — the lack of an unswerving fundament

¹ For an exposé of the polemics, see: Oittinen. *Op. cit.* P. 55–57; see also: Henrik Knif, "Lärda resonörer och arga kritiker," in: Clas Zilliacus and Henrik Knif, *Opinionens tryck*, in: *Skrifter utg. av Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland* 526, Helsingfors 1985.

of knowledge. In the book, which was published in 1807 and 1808, there is a passage in its § 100 entitled ‘Reflections on the Influences of the Philosophical Systems’, in which Hartman tries to deepen the ideas from the secret society speech and the promotion poem. In this passage, Hartman analyses the history of humanity from the point of view of how the different ages have managed to embrace the truth.



Title-page of the second volume
of Hartmans main work on philosophy, *Kunskapslära*.
National Library of Finland.

According to Hartman, humanity has on three occasions run through the same developmental circle of Faith, Research and Scepticism. In antiquity, the period of faith was replaced by the “research period” of the Ionic philosophy of nature. Then came the

“conceptual or sceptic period” of the Sophists, which closed the first circle. The second circle started with the rise of Socrates, who declined the speculation of the Sophists, re-animated virtue and justice and accepted the doctrine of Anaxagoras on the Spirit of the World. This was again, thus, a “period of faith.” A new period of research began then with Plato, Aristotle and Zenon, before scepticism returned with Pyrrho, the Academicians and other relativistic schools. The third and final circle began with the faith period of the Middle Ages. In modern times, a period of research began, which led to the thriving of the sciences and the Enlightenment. According to Hartman, however, humanity is again at the fringe of a new period of the scepticism. This was initiated by David Hume’s sceptic philosophy, strengthened by the “brash French epicureans” and Kant’s critique of reason. Therefore, Hartman argues, it is time for a new philosophy that will be able to restore the security of the faith period by finding a stable fundament for all knowledge.

Hartman’s historico-philosophical scheme and his poem of 1805 has a parallel to Fichte’s well-known *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, a series of lectures held in Berlin between the autumn of 1804 and the early spring of 1805 and published soon thereafter. Hartman knew Fichte — the philosophers in the Academy of Turku were generally well aware of the newest developments in German cultural life and, for example, *Åbo Tidning* had published translations of Kant and Fichte since the early 19th century. He had even tried to conceive his own system as a kind of answer to the German transcendental philosophy, the subjectivism of which he could not accept. The “history schemata” of Hartman and Fichte are answers to the same epochal situation created by the Napoleonic wars, so it is no wonder that there are some common features in them, although these are rather superficial. Both see in history a plan or a scheme that proceeds rather mechanically from stage to stage, and both see human history as a realization of some

philosophical principle. For Fichte, it is freedom, while for Hartman, it is the “happiness” (*sällhet*) that constitutes the final goal of human development. Furthermore, both men agree that the present age in which humanity lives is far from satisfactory; according to Fichte, humanity lived around 1805 in the “age of completed sinfulness” (*Zeitalter der [...] vollendeten Sündhaftigkeit*), an assessment with which Hartman would have concurred.¹

However, whereas Fichte’s history proceeded in a linear manner through five stages, Hartman’s scheme moves in triadic circles, although he seems to think that it is possible to break out from them. The triadic form of history actually reproduces the triad found in human consciousness (subject, object and the representational relation connecting them), which Hartman has made the all-inclusive structural principle of his theory. It is the same triad that occurs in the theories of mind of Reinhold and Fichte, although these philosophers have not tried to use it as a key to the universal history, unlike Hartman.

Fama posterior

What makes Hartman’s utopia interesting today is the fact that it was a product of the antinomies of Enlightenment thought and, at the same time, an attempt to overcome them in the confines and by the means of the self-same Enlightenment. I have already mentioned the kinship between Hartman’s philosophy and the system of Karl Leonhard Reinhold. Both men tried to find the apodictically certain foundation of knowledge from the analysis of the Ego. Here, they followed the strategy that Descartes had used a century and a half earlier. Descartes concluded that the only thing that is absolutely certain in our thinking is the act of thinking itself: *ego*

¹ For a recent presentation of Fichte’s philosophy of history, see: Manfred Kühn, *Johann Gottlieb Fichte — Ein deutscher Philosoph*. München: Beck 2012. P. 467 sqq.

cogito, ergo sum. In like manner, both Reinhold and Hartman analyze human consciousness. However, unlike Descartes, who was contented with his *ergo sum*, Hartman and Reinhold find that the “I think” has a structure. One can discern a threefold, consisting of the subject of thought, the object(s) of thought and the thought itself.

It has been obvious for a long time that the “Cartesian option” does not lead to absolute certain knowledge, but instead to always new aporias. One could say this is the irony of all philosophical inquiry, but in the late 18th century it yet seemed possible to many that an ideal society could be constructed following the precepts of Reason, which were considered infallible. This was a one-sided conception of reason, since it excluded the idea of a necessary self-criticism of reason, the idea that Kant proposed in his groundbreaking works of the 1780s onwards. So, in the last years of the 18th century, we encounter a form of utopianism that relies on the absoluteness of Reason, a kind of Reason that has already found all of its truths and only remains to be applied in social life. This was the conviction of the Jacobins during their short reign in 1793–1794, and the same rationalistic-deductive principle for reforming the society can be found in Fichte’s *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* of 1800, which is conceived exactly as a *Vernunftsstaat* (State of Reason), whose organization and policy are all deduced from rational principles.

Of course, such rationalistic utopias are known from all historical periods. What makes the social utopias of the late Enlightenment (strictly speaking, the decade and a half from 1790 onwards) so specific is their connection with the philosophical enquiry to find the fundament of absolute certainty for all of our knowledge. In German literature, this kind of philosophy is often called *Grundsatzphilosophie* (“grounding philosophy”) and its chief representatives were Reinhold and Fichte. It seems to me that Hartman’s philosophical system can be referred to this current; in fact,

he demonstrates the necessary connection between a *Grund-satzphilosophie* and a social utopia in an even more distinct manner than his German colleagues.



**ZUR AKTUALITÄT DER IDEEN
DER AUFKLÄRUNG IN RUSSLAND
UND DEUTSCHLAND AM BEISPIEL
VON KROPOTKINS KOMMUNITARISMUS
UND STIRNERS INDIVIDUALISMUS**

Maria Rakhmaninova

Einleitung

Die wenigen Berührungspunkte zwischen dem russischen Denker Pjotr Alexejewitsch Kropotkin (1842–1921) und dem Deutschen Max Stirner (1806–1856) scheinen einen Zusammenhang zwischen den beiden Philosophen auszuschließen. Der scheinbar einfache Vergleich der Anarchie-Konzeptionen der beiden Denker hat auf den ersten Blick vielmehr im Gegenteil eine Entgegensetzung beider Konzeptionen, die Hervorhebung der Differenz zwischen ihnen und ihre Verortung in verschiedenen Koordinatensystemen zur Konsequenz.

Während Kropotkin nämlich der Ansicht ist, daß der vollständige Zustand des kommunistischen Anarchismus Ziel der Revolution ist, glaubt Stirner im Gegenteil, daß alle Formen des Kommunis-

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 123–136.

mus bewältigt werden müssen. Er tritt für die Eigenart der Persönlichkeit ein, für die ihr eigene sogenannte Antigesellschaftlichkeit, ihre spezifische Individualität, die Kropotkin eher kritisch sieht. Während Kropotkin den Aufstand des Allgemeinen gegen das Einzelne für unerlässlich hielt, spricht Stirner von einer Notwendigkeit des Aufstands des Einzelnen gegen das offenkundig totalitäre und destruktive Allgemeine.

Offenbar ist außerdem die Unvereinbarkeit der philosophischen Positionen, die Kropotkin und Stirner beziehen: des Positivismus im Fall Kropotkins und des Neuhegelianismus im Fall von Stirner. Dabei ordnet Kropotkin die Ethik der Wissenschaft unter, indem er die Gesetze der Gesellschaft auf die Natur überträgt. Stirner tritt gegen das wissenschaftliche Herangehen an den Menschen auf, weil der Mensch seiner Meinung nach kraft seiner Besonderheit, Individualität und Eigenartigkeit außerhalb des Kompetenzbereiches der Wissenschaften steht. Wissenschaft verwandelt ihrerseits das Einzelne ins Allgemeine, sie verwandelt alles Lebendige in abstrakte Konstruktionen, innerhalb derer alles ihnen wirklich Eigene verloren geht. Stirners Ethik ist eine Ethik des Egoismus und des individuellen Willens.

Offensichtlich ist also, dass es um Vertreter ganz verschiedener Wert- und Normativsysteme geht. Und diese Systeme widersprechen einander im Grossen und Ganzen.

Fragestellung

Auffällig in diesen Systemen ist aber nicht das, was darin verschieden ist, weil es sowieso klar ist. Für unser Thema interessiert uns vielmehr etwas ganz Anderes.

Warum finden wir uns in ein und demselben konzeptuellen Bereich wieder — im libertären Bereich des Anarchismus, wenn wir Stirner und Kropotkin studieren, und nicht in ganz verschiedenen Bereichen? Warum scheint der Positivist Kropotkin dem Neuhege-

lianer Stirner näher zu stehen als anderen Positivisten — zum Beispiel den liberalen Positivist? Und warum ist der Neuhegelianer Stirner trotzdem Vertreter des Anarchismus, während die meisten Neuhegelianer Verfechter des Kapitalismus und der Sakralität des Privateigentums und in diesem Sinn keine Anarchisten sind?

Anders gefragt: wie ist diese nicht auf den ersten Blick zu erklärende epistemologische Situation zu beschreiben, in der sich der Neuhegelianer und der Positivist gegenseitig näherstehen als den Vertretern der philosophischen Traditionen, zu denen sie formell gehören? Was macht die Spezifik dieser Situation aus? Und worin besteht ihre Bedeutung für die Gegenwart?

Dieser Vortrag hat die Suche nach Antworten auf diese Fragen zum Gegenstand. Wir beginnen mit der Klärung einiger zentraler Ausgangspunkte.

Hauptthesen von Kropotkins Kommunitarismus

Wir beginnen mit Kropotkins Lehre und beleuchten einige ihre Hauptthesen.

Kropotkins Kritik ist auf die Zeit gerichtet, in der die freien Städte von Europa ihre Freiheit zu verlieren begannen, also ungefähr das 15. Jahrhundert. Stattdessen verwandelten sie sich in den starken Staat, in dem alle gesellschaftlichen Kräfte dem Staat untergeordnet wurden.

Kropotkins Kritik ist außerdem die Kritik der herrschenden Methodologie der Geschichte und sie klingt in der Tat wirklich überzeugend. Diese Kritik betrifft Folgendes: von einer bestimmten Zeit an beschrieben die Chronisten nur Kriege und Unglücksfälle des Volkes, weil ihnen alles Andere unwesentlicher Alltag zu sein schien. Schließlich entstand eine Täuschung: die ganze Geschichte schien ausschließlich aus Blutvergießen und aus der Gewalt des Starken zu bestehen. Dieser Umstand bewirkte natürlich, dass viele

totalitäre Systeme in allen Zeiten sich damit rechtfertigten, dass sie und ihre Gewalt echt naturgemäß und üblich seien.

Aber dieses Bild hat nach Ansicht Kropotkins nichts mit der Realität der wirklichen Geschichte zu tun. Nur die Friedenszeiten könne man vielmehr für repräsentativ halten; die Zeiten, in denen man einfach lebt, arbeitet, verkehrt, und seine schöpferischen Züge äußert. Nur die Friedenszeiten seien für die Forschungen zum Menschen und zur Gesellschaft wissenschaftlich relevant und wirklich informativ und nicht die Zeiten der Kriege, durch die nur sehr wenige Menschen in die Geschichte eingingen und die ganze Gesellschaft übergangen wurde.

Trotzdem hat sich bis jetzt keine Tradition herausgebildet, die diese Zeiten beschreibt. Deswegen erscheint es jetzt so selbstverständlich, in der Autorität und in starken Hierarchien nichts Unannehmbares zu finden.

Während des Werdens der Staatlichkeit im 15. Jahrhundert gingen auf diese Weise die Solidarität und der gesellschaftliche Instinkt verloren, die den Menschen und der Gesellschaft zuvor eigen waren. Die schriftliche Geschichte ist eine Art Spiegel geworden und die Gesellschaft hat begonnen, sich durch diesen Spiegel zu untersuchen und zu begreifen. Man begann, diesem Spiegel zu glauben und ging von nun an in seiner Selbstbesinnung von diesem Spiegelbild aus.

Die mit gegenseitiger Hilfe und Solidarität erfüllte Welt fing an zu verschwinden. An ihre Stelle trat eine ganz andere Welt — die Welt, in der das Allgemeine das Einzelne völlig verschlang, und in der die Individualität und der Egoismus herrschende Werte geworden sind. Kropotkin schreibt: “während die Pflichten der Menschen gegenüber dem Staat zunahmen, verringerten sich die Pflichten der Menschen einander gegenüber.”¹ Jedem Menschen blieben nur die Pflichten sich selbst und dem allumfassenden Staat

¹ Кропоткин П.А. *Взаимная помощь как фактор эволюции*. Минск: Белорусская энциклопедия, 2006. С. 238.

gegenüber. Individualismus wird zum grundlegenden Prinzip der gesellschaftlichen Organisation — zum Entfremdungsprinzip.

Aber gerade hier gibt es ein äußerst kompliziertes Moment, das man sehr selten beachtet. Ist dieser von Kropotkin missbilligte Individualismus derselbe wie der, den Stirner schützt?

Stirners Begriff des Eigentums

Können wir Stirners Individualismus mit dem Individualismus von zum Beispiel Bentham nur deshalb identifizieren, weil Stirners Ideen zu den Ideen von Kropotkin im Widerspruch stehen? So einfach verhält es sich nicht.

Viele Forscher lassen den Umstand unberücksichtigt, dass Stirner oft ein Wortspiel verwendet und den Leser möglicherweise verwirrt. Um so mehr gilt das für die Übersetzungen der Texte von Stirner in andere Sprachen, zum Beispiel ins Russische. Das Hauptproblem besteht darin, das Wort "Eigentum" zu übersetzen oder auszulegen. Denn man kann dieses Wort nicht wörtlich übersetzen: wir müssen natürlich von dem konzeptuellen Kontext ausgehen. Im Zusammenhang der Logik von Stirners Konzeption hat dieses Wort keine direkte Bedeutung, sondern ist vielmehr eine Metapher, mit der er die Eigenheit/Einzigartigkeit des Individuums bezeichnet. Die Eigenheit ist das Eigentum des Einzigen (erinnern wir uns an den Namen von Stirners Buchs "Der Einzige und sein Eigentum"). Was bedeutet das und wozu braucht Stirner diese Metapher?

Man kann annehmen, dass Stirner hier unter dem Wort "Eigentum" das Folgende versteht: menschliche Individualität ist von dem Allgemeinen zu erlösen und zu entlasten und muss von dem Menschen wiedergewonnen werden. Diese wiedergewonnene Freiheit wird gerade zum Eigentum des Menschen — zum Eigentum, neben dem der Mensch kein anderes ebenso wichtiges Eigentum hat, weil alle anderen Eigentümer ihn wieder zum Allgemeinen machen können. Deshalb wird die Unabhängigkeit und die Unde-

terminiertheit der Persönlichkeit so wörtlich erklärt — wie ein Eigentum. Das äußerliche Eigentum wird dem Menschen im Gegenteil als etwas Inneres aufgezwungen, aber der Persönlichkeit, dem Einzigen kann das überhaupt nicht eigen sein. Deshalb können wir annehmen, dass Stirner unter dem Eigentum nicht wirklich etwas Ökonomisches versteht, sondern etwas Philosophisches. Der Mensch, der Einzige und seine Eigenheit, seine Substanz – das ist sein wirkliches Eigentum und nicht etwas Äußerliches. Stirner spricht in seinem Text überhaupt nicht über Wirtschaft. Deshalb wäre es seltsam, diesem rein philosophischen Kontext so plötzlich einen wirtschaftlichen Sinn zuzuschreiben.

Also können wir jetzt annehmen, dass Stirners Begriff des Eigentums sich wesentlich von Benthams Konzeption des Eigentums unterscheidet. Ebenso unterscheidet sich Stirners Individualität von Benthams Individualität.

Und gleichzeitig steht Stirner in diesem Sinn Kropotkin nicht so sehr gegensätzlich gegenüber wie Kropotkin zum Beispiel Bentham oder dem Anarchokapitalisten Benjamin Tucker¹ gegenüber steht. Im Gegenteil redet Stirner in seiner Lehre von der Persönlichkeit und ihrer Eigenheit — worüber Kropotkin fast nichts geschrieben hat. Dennoch unterstrich auch Kropotkin die wichtige Rolle der Persönlichkeit, woraus wir ersehen können, dass Stirners Lehre über die Persönlichkeit Kropotkins Lehre nicht in dem Maße widerspricht. Kropotkin sagte wörtlich: "...eine nicht genügende Persönlichkeitsentwicklung und ein Mangel an der eigenen schöpferischen Kraft der Persönlichkeit sind zusammen eines der größten Probleme unserer Zeit. Wirtschaftlicher Individualismus brach

¹ B. Tucker (1854–1939), Proudhons Nachfolger, war ein Verfechter des marktwirtschaftlichen Systems. Im Laufe seines Lebens änderte er unter dem Einfluss verschiedener Sozialdenker gelegentlich teilweise seine Konzeption. Dabei blieb er aber maßgeblicher Ideologe des Anarchismus und Chefredakteur der anarcho-individualistischen Zeitschrift "Liberty". Sein bekanntestes Buch heißt "Statt eines Buchs" (Instead of a Book, by a Man Too Busy to Write One. 1893, 1897).

sein Wort: er brachte keine wirkliche Entwicklung der Individualität des Menschen.”¹

***Ein scheinbarer Widerspruch zwischen Stirner und Kropotkin:
die Sozialisation***

Jetzt untersuchen wir die Frage, welche Widersprüche es zwischen den Lehren von Stirner und Kropotkin gibt. Es ist bekannt, dass Stirner ein Gegner der Sozialisation war. Aber in welchem Sinn? Die Antwort auf diese Frage ist sehr wichtig.

Wenden wir uns wieder Stirners Text zu und erinnern wir uns daran, dass er zwischen den Begriffen “Gesellschaft” und “Bund” unterscheidet. Die Gesellschaft verlangt, dass der Mensch seine Freiheit (das heißt sein Eigentum, seine Eigenheit) opfert. Der Bund hingegen gibt der Person die Möglichkeit, ihre Eigenheit zu verwirklichen und sich schöpferisch und individuell zu entwickeln. Die Gesellschaft ist für Stirner fast dasselbe wie der Staat — etwas Mächtiges, das den Menschen zwingen will, seine Eigenheit unterzuordnen. Der Bund ist etwas Freies, wo es keinen mächtigen Algorithmus gibt, der den Einzigen und sein Eigentum zerstört. Der Bund entsteht nur dann, wenn die Gesellschaft stirbt. Und umgekehrt: die Gesellschaft entsteht eben dann, wenn der Bund zerfällt. Daraus entnehmen wir, dass Stirner den Bund für etwas sehr Konstruktives hält, obwohl er diesen Gedanken im Buch “Der Einzige und sein Eigentum” nicht ausführlich betrachtet.

Vergleichen wir mit Kropotkin: vertritt dieser nicht dieselbe Position, wenn er sagt: “In den Städten entwickelt der Mangel an gemeinsamen Interessen in den Menschen nur Gleichgültigkeit. Mut und Kreativität finden keine Anwendung und verschwinden [...] Seit dem 15. Jahrhundert zerstörten die in Europa entstehenden Staaten alle Institutionen, in denen die Menschen gegenseitige Unterstützung praktizierten. Der Staat und seine Beamten ergriffen

¹ Крoпoткин П.А. *Взаимная помощь как фактор эволюции*. С. 260.

und bearbeiteten den ganzen zwischenmenschlichen Raum der Städte.”¹

In diesen Worten klingt Stirners Entgegensetzung zwischen dem Bund und der Gesellschaft an. In ähnlicher Weise betrachten sowohl Stirner wie auch Kropotkin den Staat also als die treibende Kraft der Entfremdung, durch die sowohl der Bund (das heißt die freundschaftliche Gesellschaft) als auch der Mensch unterdrückt werden.

Unterschiedliche Akzente, ein Gegenstand

Es gibt aber auch Unterschiede zwischen den Akzenten, die Kropotkin und Stirner setzen. Im 18. Jahrhundert waren die meisten Ethiksysteme individualistisch. Stirners Philosophie entspricht diesen Tendenzen. Er beschäftigte sich nicht mit der Philosophie der Geschichte oder mit den Problemen der Anthropologie, deshalb kam er zu keinen allgemeinen umfangreichen Schlüssen sowohl bezüglich der Wendepunkte der Geschichte als auch bezüglich des Wesens der Gesellschaft. Kropotkin unternahm eine retrospektive Untersuchung — mit Rücksicht auf die Besonderheiten des historischen Weges des menschlichen Gemeinschaftslebens und auf seine Gesetze. Der methodologische Unterschied zwischen diesen beiden Konzeptionen wurde also auch durch das Ziel der jeweiligen Theorie verursacht.

Stirner bezieht seinerseits die Position, die für seine Zeit charakteristisch ist — für die Zeit, als die ethischen Systeme von pragmatischen Gründen auszugehen beginnen. Er reagiert auf die Prozesse, die Kropotkin in seinem Werk “Ethik” auf folgende Weise beschreibt: “Die Persönlichkeitsrechte wurden nur auf einem Gebiet mit dem innigsten Streben verwirklicht — auf wirtschaftlichem Gebiet. Aber auch hier blieb die persönliche Freiheit sowohl in der Praxis als auch in der Theorie eher etwas Scheinbares als

¹ Ibid. C. 237.

etwas Zentrales. Was die anderen Bereiche angeht — zum Beispiel das politische, das intellektuelle und das künstlerische Gebiet — kann man wohl Folgendes feststellen: während der Individualismus sich immer mehr verstärkte, nahm die Unterordnung des Menschen unter eine Kriegsorganisation des Staates ständig zu.”¹ Diese Präzisierung des geschichtlich-kulturellen Kontextes des 18. Jahrhunderts erklärt wesentlich das Protestpathos von Stirner. Dabei werden die Voraussetzungen seiner Hauptwiderungen und die Gründe seiner rebellischen Ideen deutlich.

Wir können also schließen, dass der Unterschied zwischen den Theorien von Kropotkin und Stirner hauptsächlich durch die methodologische Basis bestimmt wird und nicht durch die wesentliche, substantielle Seite der Frage. Beide Lehren, die jeweils von gegensätzlichen Grundsätzen ausgehen, sind also auf ein und dasselbe gerichtet: auf die Problematik des Staates und der Staatlichkeit, der Herrschaft, der Unfreiheit. Und weil beide von gegensätzlichen Positionen ausgehen, umfassen sie diese Problematik erschöpfend, jede aus ihrer Perspektive.

Gerade heute bekommt dieser Umstand eine entscheidende Bedeutung, denn unter den postindustriellen Bedingungen gilt es, die Problematik des Staates und der Herrschaft neu zu durchdenken und zu begreifen. Die jüngsten politischen Ereignisse in Europa, Lateinamerika und in den USA zeigen uns, dass jetzt eine Suche nach neuen Formen der gesellschaftlichen Gemeinschaftlichkeit wiederaufgenommen wird. Diese neuen Formen und Ideen erscheinen als eine direkte Entgegensetzung zu den Werten, die seit der Blüte der Konsumgesellschaft herrschen und die wesentlich auf dem radikalen Individualismus beruhen. Deshalb erhalten die Lehren von Stirner und Kropotkin jetzt nicht nur methodologisch eine neue Aktualität, sondern auch, weil sie neue Einsichten für

Probleme vorschlagen, die sich dem gegenwärtigen Menschen besonders dringlich stellen.

¹ Кропоткин П.А. *Этика*. М.: Политиздат, 1991. С. 42.

Paradoxe Ordnung der Gegenwartsgesellschaft

Hier berühren wir ein sehr wichtiges Problem: das Problem der paradoxen Ordnung der heutigen Gesellschaft.

Einerseits positioniert diese Gesellschaft die Persönlichkeit als den wichtigsten Wert. Darüber reden die Regierungen, die Massenmedien und die Gesellschaftsinstitutionen — das ist eigentlich ihre offizielle Rhetorik. Die Persönlichkeit ist das am meisten geforderte Produkt des gegenwärtigen wirtschaftlichen und politischen Diskurses. Der Kult um die Persönlichkeit ist der populärste Kult der Gegenwart. Das Wort "Persönlichkeit" trifft uns überall — als ob sein Inhalt wirklich bedeutsam wäre. Diese Kategorie wird zum guten Schutz nicht nur gegen Angriffe, sondern leider oft auch gegen verschiedene Kontakte mit der Aussenrealität.

Der Mensch kann sich heute in der Persönlichkeit wie in einem Futteral verstecken und als Antwort auf alle Reizfaktoren der Realität sein Recht geltend machen, in diesem Futteral zu bleiben — um nichts in sich und um sich her zu ändern, um die Anstrengungen des Lebens auf ein Minimum zu reduzieren und um alle Unbesonnenheiten und Dummheiten mit dem Satz "Ich bin eine Persönlichkeit und das ist mein Recht" zu erklären.

Hier stoßen wir auf die andere Seite der paradoxen Ordnung. Folgt man den zahlreichen Definitionen, ist die "Persönlichkeit" etwas Ganzheitliches, Aktives und Schöpferisches. Sie ist auf eine Art das Ergebnis der langen und anstrengenden Arbeit des Menschen, sie ist eine Leistung.

Aber die eben dargestellte Betrachtung der Persönlichkeit als Futteral, in dem man sich verstecken kann, zeigt uns einen prinzipiell anderen Sinn dieses Wortes an, den es für sich selbst seit einiger Zeit unerwartet bekommen hat. Wir sehen also, dass anstelle der Ausgangsbedeutung des Wortes "Persönlichkeit" eine ganz gegensätzliche Bedeutung entstanden ist. Gerade diese letzte Bedeutung versteckt sich hinter dem edlen Sinn des Wortes "Persönlich-

keit” und man bemerkt diese Unterschiebung leider fast nie, obwohl es um ganz verschiedene Dinge geht.

Ein dritter Typ des Individualismus

Daraus entnehmen wir, dass wir jetzt nicht mehr nur von Stirners und Benthams Auslegungen des Individualismus sprechen können. Heute verstehen wir unter dem Wort “Persönlichkeit” etwas Neues — und das haben wir eben betrachtet. Deshalb können wir von einem dritten Typ des Individualismus sprechen, denn sogar Benthams Individuum ist ohnehin autonom — wenn auch dank seiner wirtschaftlichen Leistungen — zum Unterschied von der gegenwärtigen “Persönlichkeit.”

Wir haben also gute Gründe, zwischen diesen drei Varianten des Individualismus zu unterscheiden. Dieser Umstand zeigt uns, dass Stirners Lehre vom Individualismus dadurch in Misskredit gebracht wird, dass man zwischen den drei Typen von Individualismus nicht unterscheidet. Und daraus resultiert auch ihre scheinbare Gegensätzlichkeit gegenüber der Lehre von Kropotkin. In Wirklichkeit könnte sein Verständnis des Individualismus jedoch nicht nur für einen Menschen, sondern auch für die ganze Gesellschaft wirklich konstruktiv sein.

Der Kommunitarismus klagt heute über den radikalen Individualismus der Gegenwart und sieht darin die Ursachen und die Voraussetzungen des gesellschaftlichen Verfalls und der umfangreichen Krise in vielen Bereichen — zum Beispiel im Bereich der Kultur, der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen, der Umweltbehandlung — und so weiter. Aber wir sehen jetzt, dass der Kommunitarismus in diesem Sinn nicht Stirners Individualismus meint, sondern die zwei anderen Formen des Individualismus — den Individualismus von Bentham (das heißt den rein wirtschaftlichen Individualismus) und den Individualismus der passiven, faulen und fruchtlosen sogenannten „Persönlichkeit.“ Aber wenn der Kom-

munitarismus sogar Stirners Individualismus ablehnt, verfällt er in das Extrem des autoritären Kommunitarismus, das ebenso maximalistisch und schädlich für den Menschen und die Gesellschaft zu sein scheint wie das Extrem des äußersten Individualismus von Bentham oder das der Konsumgesellschaft.

Ausweg

Deshalb kann der Ausweg aus der schwierigen Situation des Individualismus in der gegenwärtigen Welt in Folgendem bestehen. Es erweist sich nicht als notwendig und hilfreich, dem Individualismus immer sofort sein scheinbar antagonistisches Modell des Sozialismus gegenüberzustellen. Vielmehr anzustreben wären eine umfassende Untersuchung des konstruktiven Potentials des Individualismus und der entsprechende Rückgriff auf die Theorie Stirners, der gerade dieses konstruktive Potential beschrieb. Dadurch könnte auch das Problem des Autoritären, das viele Formen des Kommunitarismus kennzeichnet, behoben werden und dieser als gute und überzeugende Alternative zur heutigen krisenhaften Gesellschaft fruchtbar gemacht werden.

Stirners Form des Individualismus ist außerdem die einzige Form, die noch nie maßgeblich ausprobiert wurde und die deshalb den Individualismus überhaupt rehabilitieren kann — in der Gesellschaft, in die der Individualismus so viel Verheerendes und Verderbliches gebracht hat und in der deshalb seine Chancen, als attraktive Möglichkeit betrachtet zu werden, gegen Null gehen.

Hinzu kommt, dass Stirners Individualismus dem Konzept Benthams und dem oben beschriebenen gegenwärtigen Verständnis von Individualismus ebenso konsequent entgegen steht wie Kropotkins Kommunitarismus — allerdings aus einer anderen Perspektive. Die Ursache besteht in Folgendem: beide Konzeptionen versklaven die Persönlichkeit und determinieren sie total, statt sie frei zu machen — wie sie es versprechen. Die Gesellschaft, die aus den

versklavten Menschen besteht, kann nicht frei sein und hat schlechte Aussichten — sowohl im Bereich der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen und der Organisation der Gesellschaft als auch in Politik, Umweltbedingungen und in vielen anderen Bereichen.

Deshalb bietet eben Stirners Individualismus ein gutes Mittel gegen die verderblichen Formen des heutigen Individualismus, der die Gesellschaft atomisiert. Und dabei scheint er gleichzeitig der Weg zu einer gesunden und aktiven Gesellschaft zu sein — zu einer Gesellschaft, die auf Bünde gegründet sein könnte — wie sie Stirner beschrieb und wie sie auch Kropotkin für das Beste hielt (erinnern wir uns daran, dass für ihn die beste Form der Gesellschaft der Bund der Föderationen — das heißt Bündnisse — ist).

Stirner und Kropotkin — zwei Seiten einer Medaille

Etwas Ähnliches geschah mit der sozialistischen Lehre von Kropotkin. Einerseits wurden fast alle Formen des Kommunitarismus durch die schmerzhaften Erfahrungen beim Aufbau des Kommunitarismus in der Sowjetunion, in China und in einigen anderen Ländern im 20. Jahrhundert in Misskredit gebracht. Deshalb ruft die Rede davon schmerzliche Reaktionen bei vielen Menschen hervor. Andererseits entstand im 20. Jahrhundert ein Phänomen, das Ortega-y-Gasset den „Aufstand der Massen“ genannt hat. Und dieser „Aufstand der Massen“ bringt die Idee der Demokratie auch in Misskredit und rehabilitiert im Gegenteil den Etatismus und den Elitarismus.

Wir müssen aber begreifen, dass das, was Kropotkin unter der Demokratie und dem Kommunitarismus, also unter den Föderationen verstand, nichts mit diesen zwei Varianten der gesellschaftlichen Organisation zu tun hat. Er spricht nicht vom komfortablen Sitzen im Kinosaal — wie im Fall der anspruchsvollen aufstehenden Massen; und nicht von dem aktiven Verhalten im Tanzparterre während des Konzerts — wie im Fall der sogenannten wirtschaftlich-freien Gesellschaft.

Er redet vielmehr von der Sozialisation, dank der die Menschen aufeinander orientiert sind, um ihr gesellschaftliches Leben selbst zu organisieren — ihren gemeinsamen Vorstellungen über die Gerechtigkeit entsprechend, die sie auch zusammen ausarbeiten. Das heisst, er spricht von den freien Menschen, die zusammen ihr Bündnis bauen wollen.

Solche Einigkeit kommt nicht „von oben,“ von der Ideologie her — wie im Fall der Sowjetunion. Auch kommt sie nicht aus den Medien und der Werbung — wie im Fall, den Ortega y Gasset beschrieb. Diese Einigkeit, von der Kropotkin spricht, kommt von unten — aus den Menschen, die zu Persönlichkeiten im Ausgangsinn dieses Wortes zu werden beginnen, also in dem Sinn, den Stirner meint, wenn er von dem „Einzigem und seinem Eigentum“ spricht. Ähnliche Prozesse betrachten wir schon seit dem Jahr 2010 in der ganzen Welt: in Europa, in Lateinamerika, in den USA, teilweise sogar in Russland.

In diesem Sinn schließen die Ideen von Kropotkin und Stirner einander nicht aus, sondern ergänzen einander. Stirners „Persönlichkeit“ füllt die Lücke in der Lehre Kropotkins, in der dieses Thema nur flüchtig betrachtet wird. Das sozialistische Paradigma von Kropotkin hingegen betrachtet die Koexistenz der Persönlichkeiten, was wiederum Stirner nur flüchtig untersucht hatte.

Mit den historischen Erfahrungen der Gegenwart ist eine vernünftige Beurteilung der starken und der schwachen Seiten der sozialphilosophischen Konzeptionen der Vergangenheit möglich. Eine auswählende Synthese von Schlüsselpunkten der Lehren von Kropotkin und Stirner könnte deshalb eine adäquate Antwort auf die Herausforderungen der Gegenwart liefern.



ANDERS CHYDENIUS'S RHETORIC FOR THE FREEDOM OF FOREIGN TRADE IN SWEDEN IN 1765

Kimmo Sarje

The year 1765 meant a great change in the life of Anders Chydenius (1729–1803). As the young chaplain of Alaveteli in Ostrobothnia, he was chosen to be one of the delegates of the Estate of Clergy at the Diet (*Riksdag*) in Stockholm in 1765–1766. He attended the Diet and began to participate in the political debates of the Swedish capital. Meanwhile, he deepened his knowledge of major political and economic issues by studying papers and books and meeting other politicians. Already during the first year of the Diet, Chydenius published two powerfully worded tractates: *The Source of Our Country's Weakness* and *Memorial on the Freedom of Printing*.

In my essay “Anders Chydenius and Radical Swedish Enlightenment,” published with the papers of the previous symposium on the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia,¹ I presented a

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¹ Sarje K. “Anders Chydenius and Radical Swedish Enlightenment,” in: *The Philosophical Age. Almanac 36. The Northern Lights. Facets of the Enlighten-*

general introduction to Chydenius' career as a political and economic writer and politician in 18th-century Sweden (and Finland), which I will not repeat here. I simply summarize that he was one



Portrait of Chydenius,
an engraving by J. F. Martin,
1805.

The poem hints
to the engagement of Chydenius
with the cause of the poor:
“Animum tenem ac benignum /
Amicis, Propinquis, Miseris
devotum.”

Chydenius Institute, Kokkola

of the leading actors of the Swedish Enlightenment, a brave and just polemicist and politician, who developed a basic theory of economic liberalism in his tractate *The National Gain* in 1766, already eleven years before Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* was published.

In this paper I to concentrate on the arguments, rhetoric, and direct and indirect sources of Chydenius's tractate *Källan til Rikets Wan-Magt, The Source of Our Country's Weakness* published in 1765, a year before his most famous pamphlet. Of all the political writings by Chydenius *Källan* was the only one to be translated into a foreign language (German) during his lifetime; *Die Quelle von*

ment Culture. Ed. by T. Artemyeva, M. Mikeshin, V. Oittinen. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2010. P. 83–95.

Schwedens Unvermögen appeared in 1765. Both the original pamphlet and the German translation were published anonymously. The translator and the motive for the translation are not known. One of Chydenius's ceremonies was, however, published in Finnish in 1786, and in fact his first printed text from 1751, *Giösta Kulda*, a poem to celebrate the fifth birthday of the Prince Gustaf — was written in Finnish.

Quite recently in 2012 the first English translation of Chydenius's *Källan* appeared in a new selection of his writings entitled "Anticipating *The Wealth of Nations*" in the series Routledge Studies in the History of Economics. Peter C. Hogg is the translator, and the book was edited by Maren Jonasson and Pertti Hyttinen with a biographical introduction by Lars Magnusson.

In my presentation, which is an outline for further research rather than a detailed study, I juxtapose the quotations of Chydenius's original text with the 18th-century German translation and the new English translation to permit possible for the reader to compare the rhetoric and argumentation in different languages. I also try to shed light on the assumed sources of the text.

In the first paragraph of *Källan*, Chydenius wants to legitimize his politically severe critique of social and economic conditions in Sweden by expressing in one sentence the starting points of his political philosophy, or maybe some of the commonly accepted social and philosophical principles of the time.

Human beings are by nature so constituted that they need the help of others and must therefore gather together in larger or smaller societies, but as soon as that happens, the society is promptly beset by enemies, both external and internal.¹

¹ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*, Anticipating *The Wealth of Nations*. The selected works of Anders Chydenius (1729–1803). Ed. by M. Jonasson and P. Hyttinen, with an Introduction by L. Magnusson. Translated from the original by P.C. Hogg. L. and N.Y.: Routledge, 2012. P. 124.

Människan är af Naturen så fatt, at hon behöfwer andras hjelp, och måste därföre samla sig i större eller mindre Samfund; men så snart det är skedt, blifwer det oförtöfwat ansatt af fiender, dels utom, dels inom sig.¹

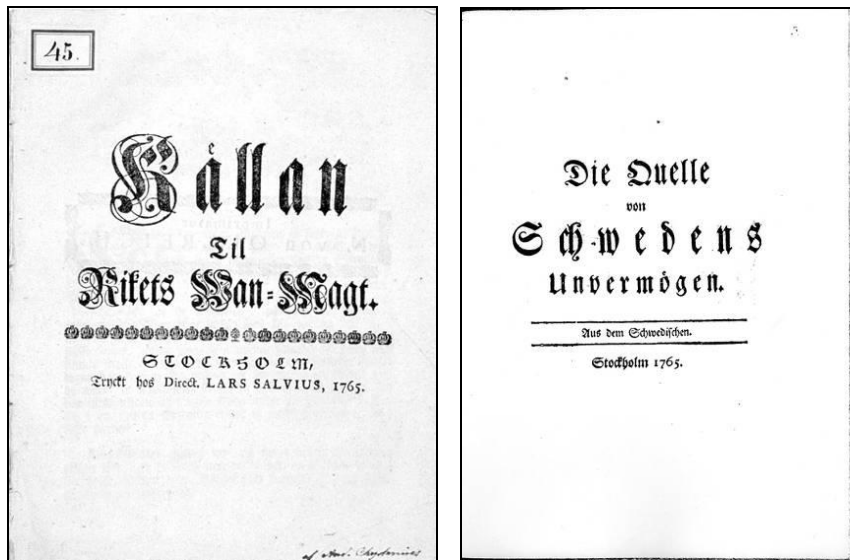
Der Mensch ist von Natur in einem Zustande, dass er anderer Hülfe nöthig hat, und muss sich daher in grössern oder kleinern Gesellschaften zusammen thun. Die Gesellschaft aber ist kaum geschlossen, so sind ausserliche und innerliche Feinde da, welche sie antasten.²

The quotation concerns the social contract and its challenges. The phrase refers to philosophical discourse on the development of mankind from the natural condition or the state of nature to civil society. We can hear echoes of the political theories of Hobbes, Pufendorf, Locke and other European philosophers of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

The German philosopher Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694) had an official position in Sweden in the 17th and 18th centuries. He was appointed a professor at the University of Lund in 1668. In Lund he published some of his major books, such as *De Jure Naturae Et Gentium Libri Octo* (1672), and its summary *De Officio Hominis Et Civis Juxta Legem Naturalem Libri Duo* (“On the Duty of Man and Citizen,” 1675), which was also translated into Swedish in 1747 with the title *Twenne Böcker om Människians Lefnads och Samlefnads Plicht*. Pufendorf was an authority on political theory in Sweden, and many professors of the Academy of Turku lectured in accordance with his philosophy. Chydenius began his studies at the Academy of Turku in 1745, and it is very likely that he was acquainted with Pufendorf’s ideas.

¹ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*, Trykt hos Direct. Lars Salvius. Stockholm: Imprimatur N. von Oelreich, 1765. P. 2.

² Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. Aus dem Schwedischen. Stockholm: Imprimatur N. von Oelreich, 1765. P. 2.



Chydenius's pamphlet describing the causes of the weakness of the Swedish realm, 1765 (left) and its German translation (right).

Chydenius Institute, Kokkola.

What must have been the will of God when he created man, was one of the questions of speculation in Pufendorf's philosophy. According to Pufendorf, people in the state of nature were free and equal, and both natural liberty (*libertas naturalis*) and natural equality (*aequitas naturalis*) ruled. People together made the social agreement followed by an agreement with their ruler.¹

Pufendorf's idea of the state of nature was more civilized than that of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Half a century older, this English philosopher had a disillusioned vision of "the way in

¹ Sarje K. "Anders Chydeniuksen liberaali ajattelu ja sen lähteitä," in: Chydenius-Instituutti, Tutkimuksia 15, Kokkola, 1985. P. 63; Tenkku J. "Oikeus ja elämän arvo. Aatehistoriallinen tutkimus 1600-luvun oikeusfilosofiasta," in: Ajatus, Suomen filosofisen yhdistyksen vuosikirja XXV, Helsinki, 1963. I also wish to thank Professor Kari Saastamoinen for his helpful comments.

which men, being what they are, would necessarily behave if there were no authority to enforce law or contract.”¹ The Canadian professor of political science C.B. Macpherson writes: “...Hobbes’s picture of the full state of nature is clearly the negation of civilized society: no industry, no culture of the earth, no navigation, no commodious building, no arts, no letters, no society, ‘and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short’.”²

While Hobbes’s ideas were known in 18th-century Sweden, Pufendorf’s and John Locke’s (1632–1704) more moderate and pragmatic social philosophy had stronger influence in Swedish political discourse. The latter part of Locke’s major study of social philosophy *Two Treatises of Government* (1689) was translated into Swedish and published in 1726 titled *Oförgräpelige Tankar Om Werldslig Regerings Rätta Ursprung, Gräntsor och Ändamål*, which reflected interest in Locke’s philosophy, and the desire of Swedish readers to learn to know his thinking.

“Locke’s state of nature is a curious mixture of historical imagination and logical abstraction from civil society,” Macpherson defines.³ Locke thought that in a state of nature people were free, but natural freedom was — if not a Hobbesian war of everyone against everyone — nonetheless very fragile. The social contract was needed to strengthen the safety and stability of society. Chydenius’s position was close to Pufendorf’s and Locke’s views.⁴

* * *

¹ Macpherson C.B. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism. Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. P. 19.

² Ibidem. P. 23.

³ Ibidem. P. 209.

⁴ Patoluoto I., Sarje K. “Anders Chydeniuksen luonnonoikeudelliset opit,” in: *Aate ja maailmankuva*. Ed. S. Knuuttila, J. Manninen & I. Niiniluoto. WSOY, Helsinki, 1979. P. 82. According to Ilkka Patoluoto, Chydenius’s ideas on social agreement are closer to Pufendorf’s philosophy.

History also shows that nowhere near as many societies have been overthrown by external enemies as by internal ones who have concealed themselves in the garb of fellow citizens.

Yet it is a curious fact that most states keep a watchful eye on those who are outside that society but often leave those within it well armed, since we ought to know that human beings are similar wherever they are and are always more easily able to do harm under the cloak of patriotism than in the guise of an enemy, and under cover of a spurious faithfulness than in open hostility.¹

Historien vittnar ock, at de utwärtas ej på långt när störtat så många Samhällen öfverända, som de, hwilka dolt sig i med-borgares drägt; men det är underligt, hwarföre de fläste **Stater**, hafwa sina ögon upmärksamma på dem, som finnas utom Samfundet; men lämna ofta swärdet bart i deras händer, som äro innom det samma, då wi likwäl borde weta, at människan är lik sig sjelf hwaräst hon är, och har altid tilfälle at lättare skada under en **Patriotisk** kappa, än i en fiendes skapnad: under et falskt förtroende, än i fullt harnesk.²

Die Historie zeuget auch, dass die ausserlichen bey weitem nicht so viele Societäten umgestürzt haben, als die in Mitbürger-Tracht verkleideten. Aber das ist zu bewundern, warum die meisten Staaten zu aufmerksame Augen auf auswärtige Feinde richten, denen aber, die in ihnen sind, das entblösste Schwerdt in Händen lassen. Sollten wir nicht wissen, dass der Mensch, er sey wo er sey, sich immer gleich ist, und immer Gelegenheit hat, viel leichter unter einem patriotischen Mantel, als in Feindes Gestalt: unter einem falschen Vertrauen, als in voller Rüstung, zu schaden.³

The above quotation of moral disapproval concerns corruption in the Kingdom of Sweden as projected into Roman history. The text echoes the thoughts of Charles-Luis de Secondat, Baron de La

¹ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 124.

² Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 2.

³ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 2.



The Swedish translations of Locke's *A Treatise of Two Governments* (Stockholm 1726) and of Samuel Pufendorf's *De officio hominis et civis juxta legem naturalem libri duo* (Stockholm 1747).

The National Library of Finland.

Bréde et de Montesquieu (1689–1755), whose writings were known in 18th-century Sweden. Montesquieu's concepts of moral and physical causes are almost analogical to Chydenius's "internal" and "external" causes or "enemies," and both philosophers shared the notion of unchangeable human essence. Montesquieu's book *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (Considerations on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans) from 1734 was translated into Swedish in 1755 by the poet Olof von Dalin with the title *Herr*

*Montesquieus Tankar öfwer Orsakerne til de Romares Wälde och Fall.*¹

It was thus no longer a mystery among the Romans that extensive amounts of property in private hands constituted a danger to liberty, but no one was any longer able to strike a blow against self-interest unless he wished to receive two in return.²

Det war då mera ingen gåta hos de Romare, at stora ägodelar hos wissa personer woro äfwentyrliga för friheten; dock war ingen mera i stånd at gifwa egennytan en släng, om han ej wille hafwa två tilbaka.³

Damals war es den Römern kein Räthsel mehr, dass grosse Guter bey gewissen Personen für die Freyheit gefährlich sind. Aber niemand war mehr im Stande, dem Eigennuss einen Streich zu geben, wo er nicht zwey wieder haben wollte.⁴

Chydenius continued his critique of the political economy of Sweden based on Mercantilism and its privileges and restrictions. The staple towns and their monopolists controlled foreign trade. Chydenius' targets were the Staple Ordinance, which allowed direct export from only a few ports in Sweden and Finland, and the Commodity Ordinance (*produktplakatet*), which "was aimed at inhibiting foreigners from shipping to Sweden anything but their own produce."⁵ Chydenius's indirect critique of the political sys-

¹ Sarje K. "Anders Chydenius Montesquieun ihailijana," in: Sarje K. *Usko, touhu, rakkaus — ajatusmuotojen arkeologiaa Suomessa*. Jyväskylä: Tutkijaliitto, 1986. P. 49–65.

² Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 124.

³ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 4.

⁴ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 4.

⁵ Magnusson L. "Anders Chydenius's life and work. An introduction," in: *Anticipating The Wealth of Nations. The selected works of Anders Chydenius (1729–1803)*. Ed. by M. Jonasson and P. Hyttinen, with an Introduction by L. Magnus-

tem was, however, camouflaged in Montesquieu's manner in the Roman past.

Every free state that fails to pay careful and studious attention to this internal enemy is as certain to collapse, even without war, pestilence and years of bad harvests, as is a clock bound to stop when the main-spring has broken, no matter how often one sets the pendulum in motion.¹

Hwar och en fri Stat, som ej tager noga och sorgfällig akt på denna inwärtas fienden, måste utan krig, pest och misswärt-år så wisst falla öfwerända, som et urwerk måste stanna, då drif-fjädern brustit, om man aldrig så ofta satte pendelen i rörelse.²

Ein jeder freyer Staat, der auf diesen innerlichen Feind nicht genau und sorgfältig Acht giebt, muss ohne Krieg, ohne Pest und Hungersnoth so gewiss über den Hausen fallen, als ein Uhrwerk stille stehen muss, wenn die Feder gesprungen ist, so oft man auch das Pendul in Bewegung bringet.³

Social structures and general tendencies determined the explanations of historical processes in Montesquieu's philosophy, and Chydenius often used the same kind of reasoning in *Källan*. Montesquieu writes:

It is not chance that rules the world. Ask the Romans, who had a continuous sequence of successes when they were guided by a certain plan, and an uninterrupted sequence of reverses when they followed another. There are general causes, moral and physical, which act in every monarchy, elevating it, maintaining it, or hurling it to the

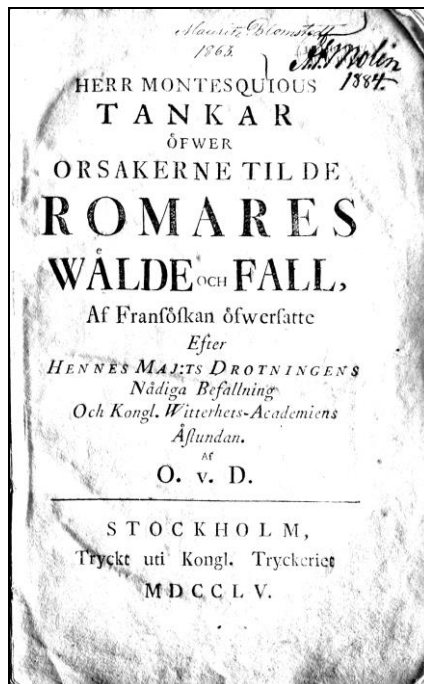
son. Translated from the original by Peter C. Hogg, L. & N.Y.: Routledge, 2012. P. 14.

¹ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 124.

² Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 4.

³ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 4.

ground. All accidents are controlled by these causes. And if the chance of one battle — that is, a particular case — has brought a state to ruin, some general cause made it necessary for that state to perish from a single battle. In a word, the main trend draws with it all particular accidents.¹



The Swedish translation
of Montesquieu's
*Considérations sur les causes
de la grandeur des Romains et
de leur décadence*
(Stockholm 1740);
the translator was
Olof von Dalin.
The National Library of
Finland

Montesquieu confirms his theory by pointing to an illuminating example in the warlike history of Denmark and Sweden:

We see that the land forces of Denmark, for nearly two centuries, have almost always been beaten by those of Sweden. Apart from the

¹ Montesquieu. *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and Their Decline*. Transl. with notes and an introduction by D. Lowenthal. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968. P. 169.

courage of the two nations and the chances of war, there must be an inner vice in the military or civil government of Denmark which has produced this effect — and I do not believe it is hard to discover.”¹

Sweden had collapsed from its role as a leading European power through the desperate wars of Carl XII, with these events culminating in the violent death of the king in 1712. Chydenius thought that after tyranny, and under the rule of the estates, the crucial cause of the country’s weakness was the unequal or unnatural distribution of economic resources. That was the source of corruption and moral decadence, and the obstacle that prevented people from maintaining their moderate lives. Liberty and equality became almost synonyms in Chydenius’s theory.

One can see from this how it is possible for the greatest national profit in trade and commerce, if it is concentrated in a few hands, to be far more harmful to the country than if it loses an entire province as a result of war. As desirable as it is for a nation to preserve its liberty, so too must it pay equal attention to the wealth that accumulates in certain places.²

Häraf kan man se, huru det är möjligt, at den största **nationela** winst i handel och rörelse, kan, då den faller i få händer, wara Riket långt skadeligare, än då det genom Krig förlorar en hel **Province**. Så kärt det altså är för en **Nation**, at bibehålla sin frihet, så upmärksam måste han ock wara på de rikedomar, som samlas på några wissa ställen.³

Hieraus kann man sehen, wie es möglich say, dass der grösste National-Gewinnst im Handel und Verkehr, wenn er in einige wenige Hände fällt, dem Reich weit mehr Schaden bringen kann, als der Verlust einer ganzen Provinz. So lieb daher einer Nation die Erhaltung ihrer

¹ Ibid. P. 169.

² Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country’s Weakness*. P. 124–125.

³ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 4.

Freiheit ist: so aufmerksam muss sie auf die Reichthümer seyn, die auf gewissen Stellen gesammelt werden.¹

Chydenius's political conclusion was that liberty and economic equality are the preconditions of the success of the country. His position foreshadowed contemporary Nordic egalitarian and democratic society. He even questioned the legitimacy of private property if the political conditions of the acquisition of the capital had not been "natural." This standpoint must have been rare in liberal politics in the 18th century.

The community at large may have no right to the property of private individuals when it has been legally acquired, but on the other hand it also contributes to the ruin of the country if it does not promptly open those dams that have gathered wealth together in few places and impoverished the rest.²

Det almänna äger wäl ingen rättighet til **Privatorum** äodelar, när de likmåttigt Lagarna tilfallit dem; men deltager och på andra sidan uti Fosterlandets fördärf, om det ej skyndsamt öppnar de dammar, som samlat skatter på några få ställen, och utarmat de andra.³

Das Publicum hat zwar kein Recht an Privatpersonen Güter, wenn sie denselben rechtmässig zugefallen sind; aber auf der andern Seite nimt es auch an des Vaterlandes Verderben Theil, wenn es nicht bald die Dämme öffnet, welche auf einigen wenigen Stellen die Schässe gesammelt, alle andre aber ausgarmet haben.⁴

Chydenius's economic policy combined the demand for equality with the idea of the night-watch state. He was convinced that freedom produced equality and would not cause the accumulation

¹ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 4.

² Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 125–126.

³ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 4.

⁴ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 4.

of capital in the hands of the few. On the other hand he called for the active political role of the state “to open the dams” and to make the markets work for common interest and equality. Otherwise, the state must interfere in the system but only to guarantee fair play. It seems that free trade and economic liberty were not values unto themselves for Chydenius but rather means for welfare and moderate equality in society.

The closer a nation has remained to nature, the wealthier and more populous has it become, the more evenly is its wealth distributed and the more felicitous is its government. Likewise, the more anyone has interfered with commerce and industries, the worse and the more wretched is the state.¹

Ju enfaldigare någon **Nation** fölgt naturen, ju förmögnare och talrikare har han blivit, ju jämnare finnas rikedomarna utdelte oh ju lyckligare är dess Regemente: twärt om, ju mera någon konstlat i handel och näringar, ju sämre och olyckligare **Stat**.²

Je ungekünstelter eine Nation der Natur gefolget ist, desto vermögender und zahlreicher ist sie geworden, desto gleicher finden sich ihre Reichthümer vertheilet, und desto glücklicher ist ihr Regiment: Hingegen je mehr sie in Handel und Erwerb gekünstelt hat, desto schlechter und unglücklicher ist der Staat.³

* * *

“China, the wealthiest country in the whole world, provides incontrovertible proof of this. There, towns have no privileges, and there is no difference between urban and rural industries, so that the entire country is like a town and all the towns are like the most

¹ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 126.

² Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 4–5.

³ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 4.

attractive countryside,” Chydenius writes.¹ He shared with many contemporary authors the belief, suggested by the French writer Jean Baptiste Du Halde (1674–1734) in his book *Description de la Chine*, that China would be a model country of freedom and equality.² In Europe only Holland and maybe England could have been comparable with “the state that has freed its commerce and crafts the most.”³

In contrast to that, Sweden has believed that financial and commercial secrets, exclusive privileges, bounties, constraints, and a variety of prohibitions would bring us prosperity. We have now struggled with all this for a long time and have finally come to the point that, without pestilence and war, we have become underpopulated; without commercial liberties, the commissioning agents of foreigners; without bad harvests, hungry; and with the greatest of mines, destitute of coin,” Chydenius paints the sad landscape of Swedish society.⁴ He wanted to prove how the Chinese utopia could be realized in his motherland by combining the free market with the love of the people. The invisible hand of liberty would create a society of justice, prosperity and equality.

Nature itself ... demonstrates that nothing but liberty and love of humanity are the appropriate building materials to endow societies with power and prestige. ... how all the trades combined, when free, move people to the right places, where they are most useful to themselves and the whole country: and finally no political laws in the world have been able to correctly regulate this, which nature achieves so easily and effortlessly.⁵

¹ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 126.

² Ibid. P. 137 (Notes).

³ Ibid. P. 126.

⁴ Ibid. P. 126–127.

⁵ Ibid. P. 136–137.

Naturen sjelf ... wisar, at intet annat, än frihet och människo-kärlek äro de rätta bygnings-ämnen, som gifwa Samhällen styrka och anseende. ... huru alla näringar tilsamman tagne i sin frihet, jämka folket på sina rätta ställen, där de äro nyttigast för sig sjelfwa och hela **Staten**: och ändteligen huru inga **Politiska** Lagar I werlden warit i stånd, at rätt **reglera** detta, som naturen så lätt och utan möda uträttar.¹

Die Natur selbst ... weiset, dass Freyheit und Menschenliebe die richtigen Baumaterialien sind, die dem Staat Kräfte und Ansehen geben. ... Wie alle Gewerbe in ihrer Freyheit zusammengekommen behusige Leute genug nach ihre rechte Stellen hin vertheilen wird, wo sie für sich und dem ganzen Staat am nüsslichsten sind, und endlich: Wie keine politische Gefesse in der Welt im Stande gewesen, das recht zu reguliren, was die Natur so leicht und ohne Mühe ausrichtet.²

* * *

Should the gentle Reader find that I have taken truth as my guide on this subject, he will presumably not refuse to agree with me; but if, despite my best intentions, I have overstepped the mark, it behooves him to convince me of that with reasoned arguments.³

Finner den Benägne Läsaren, at jag härutinnan fölgt sanningens rättesnöre, lærer han icke wägra mig sitt bifall: men har jag i min wälmening stigit af wägen, så tilkommer det honom, at med skäl öfwertyga mig därom.⁴

Findet der geneigte Leser, dass ich in meinen Gedanken die Wahrheit zur Richtschnur gehabt; so wird er mir seinen Beyfall nicht versagen.

¹ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 20, 21–22.

² Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 18, 19–20.

³ Chydenius A. *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. P. 137.

⁴ Chydenius A. *Källan Til Rikets Wan-Magt*. P. 22.

Habe ich aber in meiner guten Meynung des rechten Weges verfehlet, so ist es seine Pflicht, mich mit Gründen davon zu überzeugen.¹

The culmination of Chydenius's tractate *Källan* resembles Immanuel Kant's principles of the Enlightenment in his essay *Was ist Aufklärung?* from 1784. The issue here was the maturity of mankind. Enlightened discourse is neither obeying or believing but arguments against arguments.



¹ Chydenius A. *Die Quelle von Schwedens Unvermögen*. P. 20.

**THE WORKS OF ANDERS CHYDENIUS:
A SPRINGBOARD
FOR COMPARATIVE RESEARCH**

Maren Jonasson

Anders Chydenius (1729–1803) was one of the most noteworthy politicians and political writers in the Swedish realm during the eighteenth century. He is most of all remembered as an outspoken, and sometimes even fierce, defender of freedom in all areas of life. Chydenius's views on freedom of trade and industry for instance were a consequence of his general ideology of freedom. According to him, democracy, equality and respect for human rights were the only way towards progress and happiness for the whole of society. Chydenius is oftentimes categorized, together with Peter Forsskål (1732–1763), as a representative of the more radical wing of the Enlightenment movement in the Swedish realm.¹ Besides being an active and influential actor on the political scene, Chydenius worked as chaplain in Alaveteli and later as

The Philosophical Age. Almanac 39. The Northern Lights: Social Philosophies and Utopias of the Enlightenment in Northern Europe and Russia. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2013. P. 154–165.

¹ For Chydenius's role in the Swedish/Finnish Enlightenment, see contributions by Kimmo Sarje and Vesa Oittinen in: *The Philosophical Age. Almanac 36. The Northern Lights: Facets of the Enlightenment Culture*. St. Petersburg — Helsinki: St. Petersburg Center for the History of Ideas, 2010.

rector (vicar) in Kokkola in the county of Ostrobothnia in today's Finland. By his peers he was elected as their representative in the Estate of Clergy at the Diets of 1765–1766, 1778–1779 and 1792. His most important political achievement was the Ordinance on Freedom of Writing and Printing, the first Freedom of Information Act in the world, passed by the Swedish Diet in 1766. Chydenius played a crucial role in the process leading up to this historical law. The publishing of the complete works of Chydenius in Swedish and Finnish and his selected works in English will function as an important springboard for comparative research in the future.

The international research community has over the years directed several inquiries to the Anders Chydenius Foundation in Finland (and other institutions involved in promoting Anders Chydenius's legacy) concerning the availability of English translations of his texts. Every time the Foundation has been forced to reply that only one text was available in English, *The National Gain*, originally written in 1765 and published in English in 1931 by Ernest Benn Ltd.¹ Earlier Swedish editions of parts of his works, E.G. Palmén's of 1880 and Georg Schauman's of 1908, are also difficult to access, not to mention the original manuscripts and prints, available only in special reading rooms at archives and libraries mainly in Finland and Sweden. The translations into Finnish made in the 1920s did not meet the academic requirements, nor did they hold up for scrutiny. Understandably the situation was most unsatisfactory. The Anders Chydenius Foundation in cooperation with the University of Jyväskylä/Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius and the Support Association of the Chydenius Institute in Finland therefore launched a project to publish a critical edition of Anders Chydenius's works, and most importantly for the international readership, a selection of Chydenius's most important writings translated into English.

¹ The same edition appeared in facsimile in 1994.



Portrait of Anders Chydenius at the age of 41 years,
in the church of Alaveteli, by Per Fjällström 1770.
By courtesy of Chydenius Institute, Kokkola.

The aim is to publish the complete works in five 500-page volumes in their original language Swedish in the coming years.¹ All five volumes will also be translated into Finnish and published in five corresponding volumes. It was decided by the initiators of the project that the principal works of Chydenius in English were to be accompanied by a comprehensive biography. By this the publish-

¹ The first volume in Swedish was published in September 2012 and the corresponding volume in Finnish in November 2012.

ing project and its financiers hope to prepare the ground for fruitful transnational comparisons and lift Chydenius from the footnotes to the keynotes. Reading Chydenius today, one is astonished by how modern his thoughts still are, in a world where democracy, freedom of information and freedom of religion are burning questions worldwide.

The English selection, with its clear reference to Adam Smith's opus magnum, *Anticipating The Wealth of Nations. The selected works of Anders Chydenius (1729–1803)* was published in September 2011 by Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group). Eleven texts, out of the roughly 85 written documents (including both prints and manuscripts) that have survived, were selected for this volume. In addition to the 85 writings, Chydenius's literary remains include fifteen letters written by him. The number of surviving letters is remarkably low considering that Chydenius probably was a busy letter-writer. We can assume that hundreds of letters have been lost over the years. Moreover, at least five known manuscripts have been lost. Likely there are unrecorded cases as well, and the whole body of his works will therefore never be known to its full extent.

The selection was made according to certain criteria. The editorial board wanted to include texts that most likely would appeal to an international audience, pieces that thematically touch upon universal issues, such as freedom of movement, expression, religion and enterprise. The pieces dealing with Chydenius's views on economic matters perhaps dominate somewhat in this selection. Although he wrote extensively on religious matters, homiletics in particular, none of his theological texts were included, partly due to his views being fairly common in this regard, partly due to their sheer length. Another criterion in selecting the texts was their importance and impact at the time they were written. Many times Chydenius's political pamphlets caused quite a stir and they actively promoted the process towards an extension of many freedoms and rights. The last piece included is his *Autobiography* written in

1780. It was selected because it sheds light on how Chydenius himself regarded his work and his input, and it is an interesting account of his life the way he chose to present it.

When only so few texts could be included, complete subject areas had to be left out. If we look at the actual number of surviving pages, his printed sermons on the Ten Commandments and on the latter part of the catechism form the largest group, in total almost 700 pages. It is regrettable that none of his theological texts could be included, as this would have given a fuller picture of his authorship, of him as a person and of the many roles he played as a politician, clergyman, and economic thinker. Then again, the selection is indeed quite versatile if we consider that the book was published in a Routledge series on the history of economics.

In the case of these eleven texts selecting the editions on which the translations were to be based caused almost no difficulties as they as a rule were only printed once during Chydenius's lifetime, or, in the case of manuscripts, only one written copy has survived. Two of the texts, *The Source of our Country's Weakness* and *A Remedy for the Country by Means of a Natural System of Finance*, were, however, printed twice. In both cases the second edition was published within weeks from the first edition and the differences between the two are miniscule, consisting mainly of mistakes made by the printer or typesetter and variations in spelling, and thus only rarely having any consequences for the translation. The editorial board decided to base the translations on the version containing fewer obvious mistakes, well aware of the possibility that the selected edition might be the second and not the first.

The structure the volume is easy to follow. Firstly Anders Chydenius's life and work are presented in a comprehensive biography written by Professor Lars Magnusson. The biography is followed by the *Selected works*. Each text by Chydenius is followed by a short commentary placing the text in its historical and thematic context. All eleven commentaries are written by Professor Mag-

nusson. The eleven texts are divided thematically and chronologically into four parts. The first part consists of four texts, all written during the important Diet of 1765–1766. Here you can find for instance, *The National Gain*, which perhaps is his most well-known piece, and the no less important *The Source of Our Country's Weakness*. Thematically they all deal with economic matters and the sorry state of the Swedish economy at that time. The second part presents three texts on the issue of free access to official documents and freedom of the press, or freedom of writing and printing as Chydenius said. These were questions that Chydenius very actively promoted during that same Diet in the mid-1760s. The third part of the book has been given the title “Radical rector of Kokkola,” Kokkola being Chydenius’s hometown, and it consists of three texts written during the last years of the 1770s. This is a period in Chydenius’s life when his political thinking and ideas can be called quite radical and his proposals undaunted. He demanded equal rights for masters and servants, promoted freedom of trade and industry, and argued successfully in favour of an increased religious tolerance. The fourth part only consists of one text, the already mentioned *Autobiography*. Notes to the biography, to the translated texts and to the commentaries are placed after each text. At the end of the book appendices, a glossary, lists of referenced literature and Anders Chydenius’s central writings and indexes are included.

The publishing project was fortunate enough to engage retired librarian Peter C. Hogg in the demanding and sometimes very difficult task of translating eighteenth-century Swedish into modern English. Peter C. Hogg spent most of his career at the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum Library in London, from which he retired as head of the Scandinavian Section. The aim was to create a translation which is loyal to the original without being stiff and cumbersome to read. Something which caused the translator and the editors Maren Jonasson and Pertti Hyttinen some se-

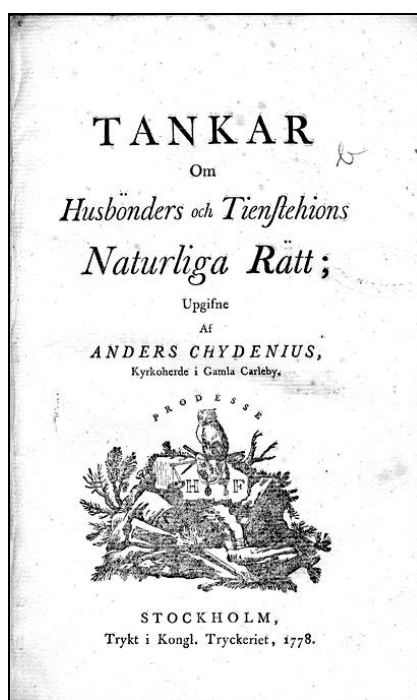
vere difficulties is Chydenius's habit of being somewhat inexact in his use of pronouns, making certain sentences almost impossible to understand, alternatively giving the reader and the translator several alternative meanings to choose from. The structural resemblance between Swedish and English allowed us to stay fairly loyal to the original, not forcing us to intervene in the order of the phrases or clauses too much. We did, however, choose to split up some of the sentences as a single sentence in Chydenius's texts easily stretches over 10–15 lines, which, of course, was very common at the time, but would cause today's readers unnecessary strain. The importance and value of an excellent translator cannot be exaggerated in a book project of this type. After all, 90 per cent of the book consists of original eighteenth-century writings by Anders Chydenius translated into modern English. We had some very intriguing discussions with the translator Peter C. Hogg trying to come to a conclusion on what Chydenius wanted to say at points where the text turns foggy and confusing. The discussions also gave interesting insights into the processes of understanding written text and how discrepant the interpretations can be, although everybody involved are reading the exact same text. Translations are interpretations – there is no way around that. Judging from the feedback given so far, we feel certain Peter C. Hogg did an excellent job.

Chydenius's texts are, as any text, very much bound to their contemporary, political context. Many of them are contributions to the political debate and need to be understood as such. To grasp and present that context to the readers was notoriously difficult. How to explain the Swedish and Finnish eighteenth-century context for the readers of today, for a global readership that cannot be expected to have very deep insights in Swedish history, let alone in the finest details of the economic system and on-going economic crisis in Sweden in the mid-1760s? Another big challenge was to come up with good English equivalents for the many political and administrative terms used in the original texts, names for different

committees and institutions, laws and ordinances, which often-times were specific for the conditions in the Swedish realm and therefore do not have natural equivalents in English. The editorial board consulted several experts and academic works, articles and books written on Swedish eighteenth-century conditions and events in English and tried to use the same or similar terms as the authors of these. In many cases, however, there seems to be very little consensus on which terms to use, and we, like the rest, found ourselves inventing new terms in English. Occasionally we supplied the text with the original Swedish term in parenthesis. For the sake of transparency a more comprehensive list of English terms together with definitions on the corresponding Swedish terms was included in a Glossary.

Place names and persons mentioned in the texts were indexed for the convenience of the reader. Names of places and persons were given their modern form and spelling both in the translation and in the index. In cases where cities and other locations in today's Sweden and Finland that have an English version of their name, i.e. Gothenburg, Karelia and Lapland, that form of the name was used, whereas other cities and locations in today's Sweden have their present day name in Swedish and cities and locations in present day Finland have their name in Finnish. Many cities and locations in Finland have a parallel form of their name in Swedish. In these latter cases the parallel form in Swedish is mentioned in parenthesis the first time the name appears. In the eighteenth century a person's name oftentimes had a parallel form in Latin. The principle here was to present the names in their current form, the way they are spelled today in Swedish, unless there is an internationally established form, i.e. for royalty and renowned scientists. Eighteenth-century currencies, measures and weights kept their original form in the translated text, due to the impracticality and impossibility of finding exact equivalents in the past or present English measuring systems. The complicated monetary system is

presented in a separate appendix where currencies and monetary terms used in the volume are given a definition. Measures and weights are converted to modern metric measures and weights in an appendix.



Chydenius's pamphlet of 1778

where he defended the “natural rights” of servants and farmhands.

By courtesy of Chydenius Institute, Kokkola.

The Swedish and Finnish versions aim at different audiences. The readership of the critical edition in Swedish will most likely consist of researches and academics interested in the exact wording and expressions used by Chydenius, whereas the translation into Finnish aims mainly at Finns, who have not had the opportunity to acquaint themselves properly with of thinking of Chydenius

since the somewhat unreliable translations made in the 1920s. The modern Finnish translation made now will also serve Finnish researches as the translation is more easily read than the original eighteenth-century Swedish. All texts are accompanied by a commentary contextualizing the original, and footnotes are included to explain difficult words in the original. The original page numbering is given in both language versions to facilitate referencing, comparison and cross-checking between the translation and the original.

The fact that Chydenius dealt with subjects ranging from poetry, mechanics, chemistry, medicine, economy and freedom of the press to agriculture, social injustices, the art of preaching, potato-growing, the production of saltpeter and vaccinations has forced the editors to consult and engage more than twenty external experts for the commentaries. Every text by Chydenius has been commented by the foremost Swedish or Finnish expert within his or her field. Professor of History and Senior International Officer at The University of Mississippi, Michael F. Metcalf, who is an expert on the Age of Liberty in Swedish history, showed a keen interest in the English translation and provided valuable advice and suggestions regarding the use of terms and concepts.

Without forgetting the outstanding exceptions, one of the obstacles for high-quality comparative research is the unfortunate fact that researches too often lack sufficient skills in other languages than their own native language and some world languages. This prevents them from using source material from smaller language areas and obstructs actual comparative research. Translations are one way around this obstacle. The volume *Anticipating The Wealth of Nations. The selected works of Anders Chydenius (1729–1803)* is an invitation to the international research community to do comparative research. The title of the book should not restrict our thinking. Let it be no secret that the title was suggested by the publisher Routledge, but the editorial board was hesitant: would such a

title exclude other potential readers interested in other aspects of Chydenius's thinking? Chydenius's economic ideas can be fruitfully compared to Adam Smith's ideas, no doubt, but Chydenius's above mentioned versatility and wide scope of activities and ideas offer many more opportunities. Interesting points of comparison between Chydenius and other authors remain to be discovered.

Another fact rendering fruitful comparisons possible is Chydenius's astounding topicality. Religious tolerance and freedom of information and expression, for instance, were subjects of keen interest to Chydenius, and they are burning questions still today. In television debates, newspaper columns and social media of today the arguments and opinions expressed are oftentimes identical to what Chydenius wrote 250 years ago. It could just as well be Chydenius debating subsidy policies, the economic crisis, censorship, transparency or religious tolerance. Researches willing to make the effort will not be disappointed. This volume will open up new possibilities and function as a springboard for inventive comparative research.

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For more information, see:

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39